Secrets of Success

Yandamoori Veerendranath

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Secrets of Success

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A GIFT FOR A SPECIAL PERSON LIKE YOU

Dear

This gift is for you. You know how unique you are to me...! I thought of many exceptional alternatives for a special person like you. I wanted to give a ring. Feared, you may loose it unknowingly. I thought of a computer. Hesitated, you may browse it unnecessarily. A beautiful bed lamp to sleep by? No.... Somewhere i read that instead of a lamp on the bedside, a ray of light is a better substitute. Hence this book. You can neither loose the wisdom unknowingly, nor use it unnecessarily.

PREFACE

It is a great privilege to write a preface to my father's book. I like to share with you how he had shaped me and helped me reach this position today.

One evening, some seven years ago, I received a phone call from the Board of Secondary Education informing me that I secured a State Rank in my intermediate examination.

Tears of joy rolled down my cheeks. I am sure you would agree with me that it is one of the best moments in any student's lifetime. Thank s to my father I could accomplish that.

Later as we discussed my future plans and career pathways that I should consider after my intermediate, my father suggested me to go for a job with my 'plus two' qualification.

I was naturally surprised. I remember his words; "...if you concentrate with your senses, studying for three hours a day is enough to come off in flying colours."

I joined as an apprentice in a Chartered Accountancy firm and later in Nagarjuna Power Corporation Ltd as an Industrial Trainee, for a monthly salary of RS. 1,500. Of course it was tough to study and work at the same time, but I enjoyed the challenge.

When I left NPC, my salary was around RS. 2,500. In the mean time, using the 'Art of Studying' instilled in me by my father I simultaneously completed in the evening college my B.Com (Hons) and Chartered Accountancy.

At this juncture, I came across an advertisement by the World Bank Group. I applied and had to face stiff competition from more than 100 candidates, most of them were from some of the prestigious Management Institutes and other Business Schools with considerable work experience. The American executive, who interviewed me, was very much convinced with my bio-data, and I bagged the job and became one of the youngest analysts in the World Bank Group.

My posting was at Delhi, and my salary was Rs. 1 lakh per month and I was 23 then.

After working for two years, I was fed up with my routine job and wanted greater challenges and varied international exposure. I wanted to study further. When I

informed my intentions to my father he readily encouraged me to take the plunge. There is a quotation in one of my father's novels, "Even if you are a fish, I believe that there is no point in staying in a pond where you don't like the water".

I resigned my job and left for INSEAD (France), ranked the World's best non-US Business School to do my M.B.A. with my two years savings, about RS. 15 lakhs. After completion of my post graduation, I joined as a Business planning and Control Executive with 'Michlin' at Singapore and worked for 2 years.

It's me who asked my father to write this book to help students whatever be the stream of education they choose. I agree with him that spending millions of rupees on education is a luxury not every one can afford.

When a parent is able to invest a simple ten minutes a day and enthuse the child to do better, as a Chartered Accountant I can assure that it would be the best investment one could ever ask for.

Praneeth Yandamoori

Education is

'What remains after one has forgotten everything

that he learnt in his school'

B.F. Skinner.

Dedication:

What is my qualification to write this book? Failure. I failed in my fifth standard and again in my sixth standard.

I was my grandfather's pampered child. When he passed away, I went to stay with my father. I was in my sixth class (second year). That's when he decided enough was enough. So he started to teach me. Just for an hour every day. Well, the result was... the following year (that is in my seventh standard) I scored a hundred out of hundred in math. I never looked back again. Ever...! I broke the fifty-year-old record of sorts of my high school in my tenth class in Hyderabad. In those days one-year concession in Article-ship was offered to students in Chartered Accountancy, if they score first class marks, and I was one of them. I was one of the youngest executives in Andhra Bank with highest paid salary.

It is not self-audacity. I always believed myself to be an average student. But then I accomplished what was not expected of an average student. That's when I started believing that an average student can be trained to succeed...!

It is unfortunate that most of parents force 'education' upon their children. They make it such a 'worst experience' unknowingly that the child understands that 'education' can never be a pleasurable experience.

It is beyond me, why parents 'insist' on study, instead of 'inspire' the child to study. Why not the parents explain the child the value of education? Why do not they teach the child that the pleasure of 'achievement' is more than the 'happiness' of watching TV or thinking of cricket? A child should be taught that getting a cartoon published in a magazine gives more pleasure than watching a cartoon serial. Here again, I am not averse to children watching a serial but my intention is to tell you that your pleasure points can also be a source of benefit to you. In the initial stages, you require only a small break through.

The Hindu: As a bank-executive, I am good at conversational English. But my writing skills in English were never better in spite of my abilities as a novelist in Telugu.

When the City Editor of 'The Hindu', asked me to write a column for his daily, I was thrilled but then I was hesitant to accept. The Hindu is known for its very high English language standards.

He encouraged me and I practiced. The title of the column is 'RIGHT TURN' and appears on every Monday in Education plus Supplement meant for students. The response from readers gave me the confidence. It reinforced my belief that 'practice leads to perfection'. My column proved to be a hit with readers. That is another accomplishment. The letters from the readers for past two years progressively gave me the confidence that by practice one can achieve something that he feels impossible at one stage.

This book is meant for an average student like me, who is willing to work smart, practice the principles mentioned in this book and come out as the 'Best'. I neither expect nor believe that all those who read this book would become Einstein or Newton or Madam Curie. But I am sure, if you practice at least some of these techniques, understand and apply the underlying philosophy, you would be one among the top five rankers of your institution wherever you are.

Education and knowledge: I am of the firm opinion that the syllabus for the 'entrance exams' to professional courses is to be drastically and methodically changed. If those in power believe that the I.Q. of the student is to be tested before granting seat in a college of professional studies, let them test the student's common sense and the ability to understand the basics of subjects that the student needs to study and pursue in future. On the other hand, the student at intermediate age must also be able to know the difference between a bank cheque and a demand draft... current affairs of the country... topography of the world and fundamentals of practical life. The student's life at intermediate stage is also at an intermediate level. Hence the child should be taught Crisis Management and Soft skills like public speaking.

When I was lecturing in a famous college at Vijayawada, I asked a girl who was appearing for an entrance test, to differentiate between a M.P. and M.L.A. The girl couldn't answer. A boy stood up to tell me that M.L.As work in secretariat under the supervision of M.Ps. The management informed me that those two students would

sure get a ranking through the entrance test to the professional course.

It is not my intention to blame them but why should a student should not be taught simple things that are useful in day-to-day life? Why a student (who wants to become a graduate in philosophy after his intermediate) know what is Ionic Bond of Electrostatic Force in chemistry, Fleming's right hand rule in physics, Cotyledon in botany and Erythrocyte in zoology at the school level which are of no use to them at all?

It is beyond my understanding as to why this student should memorise that the dental formula of a rabbit is 2.0.3.3. / 1.0.2.3, that of a human is 2.1.2.3 / 2.1.2.3, unless s/he is aiming to be in a professional course working on rabbits.

A student may give the correct answer to what a Geiger counter is, but may not know how to pay an electricity or water consumption bill. Imagine an intermediate student not knowing the difference between a postal stamp and a revenue stamp. Imagine a postgraduate not knowing what a District Collector does. What could be worse?

Scientific techniques: Some of the techniques included in this book are based on psychology and physiology. There is every reason for you to doubt the rationale behind learning everything so scientifically.

In the good old days cultivation was without any fertilizer support. Then came the time when there was demand for more food, as populations increased. So the farmers had to improve the quality of their produce. Now we spend so much time in scientific researching, and invest money in technologies that improve the processes of cultivation and increase the quality and quantum of the produce.

Imagine that your balcony has various kinds of potted plants. Some should be kept in bright sunshine and some others under the shade. Some plants need a wee bit less water and some others a little bit more. Some are to be pruned for better growth.

Our elders had helped us understand the physiology of plants. Now we add your scientific insight to it and transfer it to the next generations. When the perception continues from one generation to next, it becomes 'science', 'philosophy' and 'logic'. And that is called 'wisdom'.

Certain techniques of learning suggested in this book may not be acceptable to some

and may draw criticism. I am not here to preach that is acceptable to all and propagate the so-called universal truths to succeed like "...One should study six hours a day... Concentrate more... Work hard... Be a jewel for your country etc...." and gain appreciation from all.

I tell you what I believed and practiced. If I write that I hardly stepped into a saloon for the past thirty years, it is because I enjoy trimming my hair. And that is a verifiable truth. I believe that people see what is 'in' my head rather than what is 'on' it. If I say... 'Applying coconut oil to hair is just a luxury but not a necessity', it is because I never applied it to my hair for past four decades.

Similarly, my advices in this book like 'One day- two dawns' theory and 'Developing concentration through motivating the five sensory organs' are all practiced by me even now.

The purpose of this book is to mould you to succeed. Initially you may find it tough. But so did individuals from Abdul Kalam to Amitab Bachhan. They too went through the same phase. But they did not loose their sight or goal. They won. Yes. I want you to succeed like them. Be a winner. If you do not like something in this book discard it. Follow those techniques that you like in this book.

Knowledge is what you gain that is necessary and wisdom is what you leave that is unnecessary.

The Box items and questions: Various institutions, corporate offices and banks are evolving their own hiring practises, conducting their own tests to select candidates that suit them. Not much importance is given to your academic excellence. You may have to answer about 180 questions in two hours. Your soft skills are tested in these interviews.

You will find hundred puzzles and questions in this book, that are similar to the ones that you may be asked during those interviews, written and verbal tests. Try to solve them without looking for answers given elsewhere in this book.

Many of the questions are taken from a test conducted by World Bank for a position with a salary equivalent to Indian rupees 1 lakh. They also include questions normally asked at M N C interviews to test your aptitude.

Before concluding, I would like to highlight a point. Students, who feel that they are

lazy, not intelligent, and suffer from lack of memory and concentration, must realise a fact.

Life is always like a game of chess. We play it with Nature. Our mind and heart are the pawns, and the prize is 'happiness'. We make the first move and nature plays the counter-move. Our moves are 'Choices' and the countermoves are 'Consequences'. Interestingly, nature always wants us to win. But we either reject it or postpone it.

It has been two years since I started gathering information and it took one year for me to write this book. Some information in this book is culled from the vast Internet. I have also drawn tips from those great authors and education psychologists, who invented many techniques to facilitate the students for a better foundation and future. I thank them sincerely. I also thank Muni Prasad for refining my English and giving a 'shape' to this Book.

This book is for you.

I dedicate this small book to all those wonderful noble teachers and lectures, who taught me Mathematics, Physics, English and Commerce at Sai Baba School, Anantapur, Naya Bajar School, Khammam, Asafia High School, Hyderabad and P.R. College, Kakinada respectively.

And above all, it is to my Father Late Sri Chakrapani.

Veerendranath Yandamoori

Saraswathi Vidhya Peetham

Kakinada

INTRODUCTION

"Necessity is the mother of invention"

Is an obsolete saying

Now, it is the 'comfort'

That is the mother of invention.

Man has surpassed the stage of inventing for his necessities. Now his quest is for more soothe, ease and luxuries. To know the process of this change, the evolution of human life-style is to be studied. This is called 'Anthropology'.

In the earliest days, earth used to emit the smell of a rotten egg. There was no oxygen in significant quantity. Over a million years, the aerie-tolerant organism, which survived against molecule oxygen, gave us the required 20% oxy-generated atmosphere. In that process, when sufficient oxygen was formulated on the earth, the ancient organism disappeared and the new organism i.e., protozoa (amoeba) evolved and developed into advanced organism.

Therefore we are here in existence.

Millions of years ago, forests were thick and monkeys used to jump from one place to another by holding the branches of trees with their forelegs. Over the centuries, they have found it easier to walk with two legs instead of four. The free extra two limbs i.e., forelegs slowly assumed new functions. They became hands...!

This is the first door to intelligence.

Change in the eating habits: According to Darwin, Man has evolved from Apes and many types of them are vegetarians. Let us contemplate on a hypothetical story how man transformed to non-vegetarianism.

Some two million years ago... imagine a deer caught in the forest fire midst curry leaves. The fat of the animal would have fried its flesh. Before its death, it might have rolled over a salty soil. Thus by accident a 'Deer-65' would have been ripened. The pre-historic man appreciated the taste and changed to non-vegetarianism.

The story may look funny, but the fact is that... 'Man' was originally a vegetarian evolving from the apes and later transformed to non-vegetarianism. But nature never intended mankind to be non-vegetarian. Hence it has not equipped his with any organ that can kill the pray.

Every animal, bird or snake that eats other creature has necessary organs to kill it's pray. Eagle has a spiky beak, crocodile sharp teeth, tiger potent paws, and anaconda a strong tail. Even birds have pointed nose to pick up the insects. But look at the 'man'. He cannot even chase a rabbit in a forest and kill it, leave alone the deer.

But man has tasted the animal flesh and desired to add this newly found delicious item to his menu. But how to kill an animal, which is either more powerful and or runs faster than him?

This is the moment when an animal called 'man' started 'thinking'. His strong desire enabled him invent a new article, which was not originally gifted to him by nature – and that is called 'Weapon'. He originated an idea that, he could kill an animal by hurling a stone at it...! Thus for the first time in the history of animal kingdom, he distinguished from other creatures.

Creation of weapon is the first sign of intelligence on planet earth. Till then no animal found any artificial weapon to kill its prey. The status quo prevails even now.

Later man contemplated that, instead of killing the animal with a normal stone, it would be easier if the stone were sharpened. It might have taken thousands of years for him to discover the simple fact, but his intelligence was very rudimentary then.

Then the risk factor emerged. While hunting dangerous animals like bear or lion, there t there was always a risk of being re-attacked by them, however sharp his weapon might be. On the other side, it became a difficult task to chase rabbits and

deer and target them with stones.

As the time progressed, he weighed up the idea that instead of chasing the animals; he could hide behind a tree and kill them with the help of a bamboo stick and an arrow.

Thus he invented the 'Bow'.

Two million years ago this was a triumph in the history of the mankind...!

Simultaneously he also discovered that he could tie the skin of the animal to his feet to protect them from thorns. For more comfort he started inserting green leaves as a cushion. Later it developed into 'shoe'.

Invention of the 'House': Animals live near water-sources. A thick protective skin shields them from chill, rain and sun and need no other shelter. As man has no such provision, he had to live in caves. As a vegetarian he was comfortable, but due to his altered new food habits, he had to come out from his high mountain caves everyday in the morning, and walk down long distances (nearer to the water sources) in search of his prey. He could reach the place in the afternoon by which time animals were accustomed to take rest. It was a tough job to locate an animal when it was resting in bushes and not moving. He had to wait till the evening for his hunt and by the time he returned to the caves along with his prey, it turned out to be a late night. Man being not a 'night-roving' creature, it was highly unsafe to move in thick forests at that time.

Necessity led to another invention. While observing the birds' nests and snake pits he hit upon a novel idea. By erecting sticks and covering them with leaves, he could create an artificial shelter near the water-source and came permanently out of his caves. He named it 'house'.

Time passed by. One rainy evening he might have noticed a round-shaped stone rolling down from a high mountain. He was surprised and thought, 'why do only round-shaped stones roll, but not the square ones?' His observation steered him to another invention. Without knowing the principle of 'Centre of Gravity' he came out with a most unique article that changed his life-style and lead to a new civilisation! And that is the wheel...! Invention of 'wheel' is the first and best achievement and opened a new chapter.

The mental growth: 20, 00,000 years ago man invented the 'arrow' to kill. Later he constructed a house to live in. Can you imagine how much time it has been between both these inventions? Hold your breath. Approximately 19, 88,000 years! Yes. Considering that the ape-man first started using a weapon two million years ago, man built the first 'hut' on the earth... just 12,000 years ago only.

1. Communication through gestures. 2. Weapon. 3. Painting in caves. 4. Construction of a house. 5. Invention of a wheel. 6. Cultivation. 7. Invention of coal. 8. Transport. 9. Modern medicine. 10. Electricity. 11. Atomic energy. 12. Rocket. 13. Computer.

The graph discloses that during the history of two million years, man lived like an animal for about 19, 90,000 years. Only during the past 10 centuries his intelligence thrived to new heights and channels.

All the inventions (8 to 13 of the graph) and whatever comforts and luxuries that man is enjoying today (including medicines) were invented during the past 2 centuries only. The man of today is hundred percent more intelligent than the one of yester century. The student of last generation is less intelligent than you. To get a decent job or settle in a profession, it was enough for him if he were one of the best. But now... you should be the 'Best of the best' in the present competitive world.

ONE MOTTO

THE PLEASURE OF STUDYING

Tell me the best thing you did on earth and I decide whether to send thee to the Hell or Heaven" said the God. The soul bowed and asked "What's the difference my lord?" And the God replied "In heaven they enjoy, hell is to work". The soul confused, "Excuse me my almighty for my ignorance! How one can enjoy without any work?" The God sent him back to the earth as his ambassador, to preach the same to the people.

Parents and teachers persistently tell children to study hard to pass the exam. After getting a job, the next advice is to work hard to earn money and fame. Motivators in their personality development speeches and writers in their books often articulate that life is challenge and one should work hard to achieve success. Then what is success? Success is happiness! But if success is happiness and when one has to work "hard" for success, when he would be happy? How happiness and hard working go parallel? Is there any stage in one's life where he is sure of being happy after success knocking his door?

Happiness is itself the key to reach the target. Trading what we want most for what we want in the moment may lead to failure. But working for the target, loosing the pleasures of life will certainly lead to unhappiness. Then what is the best way?

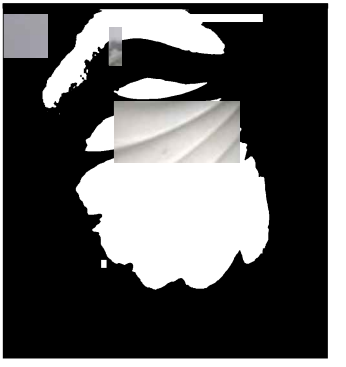
Changing priorities: Something becomes hard, when you cannot change your priorities. A student, who hitherto is enjoying his sleep till 8 O' clock, can take immense pleasure in the early breeze and a cold water bath, if practices waking up early just for few days. Same way, instead of surfing TV channels relentlessly, if a parent after coming home starts teaching his children for an hour every night; he experiences the pleasure in it.

The foolish man seeks happiness in the distant, the wise grows it under his feet. If you are going to Ooty for two days, and the travel takes three days either way, you should enjoy total eight days. If your journey and return is monotonous, you are wasting six days in melancholy, for two days happiness. This pertains to the students also. If a student takes his studies as an unavoidable pressure thrust upon him by his parents, he is wasting twenty years of his pleasurable life cursing himself. Hence the excellent sutra is... altering your priorities to make life happy. It is like enjoying raw

vegetables and sugarless coffee happily and whole-heartedly, once you know that you are diabetic.

Adapting to new priorities appears to be difficult in the initial stages, but once we adjust to new style of living, the word "hard" disappears from the dictionary. Unhappiness is the difference between our work and our expectations. The difference between job and joy is just one alphabet. This is the secret of life that our ancient Indian philosophers advocated. "Don't live 'for' happiness. Live 'with' happiness".

Your future:



A great poem in Sanskrit says that
The fate of a raindrop
Is decided by the place
Where it lands on:
One- when it hits a hot iron surface
Two- dropping on to a lotus leaf
Three- when it drops into an open shell.

The poem describes that the water drop evaporates within a split second on the hot iron, twinkles for few hours on a lotus leaf and becomes a sparkling pearl if it falls in a sea-shell.

This poem has a great relevance to a student's life. Students are of three types. Some are like pearls. Soon as they complete their education they are on their way to a career with a glorious future. At the very early age they enjoy the fame, financial comforts, luxuries and taste success in their profession and life. This is possible

because while studying, these students have spent their time in educating themselves rather than wasting on trivial. They are the real pearls.

Well, there are the other students whose scores or grades do not reflect their worth. They would have got them by just by memorising or through dubious means such as copying, plagiarising or bribing. They 'appear' to be 'smart' and 'brave' and 'intelligent'. These students get the jobs either by influence or again by bribing. They shine briefly and then they fall because they are inconsistent.

The third group includes those who are envied at student level. They have generally a good time... partying, having fun and chilling out. They come out of the college with just about average scores. They are forced to settle for a lacklustre job without much great career prospects. They loose all the enthusiasm for life, like the drop of water that falls onto a hot iron sheet and their jest for life evaporates.

Fate may decide the future of a raindrop, but a student can certainly contribute to his destiny. A student, who applies the skills and the other techniques of studying, would certainly top the ladder and enjoy the benefits throughout his life. It depends on how he develops his knowledge during his student career.

Knowledge: What is knowledge? It is a set of facts, accumulated and stored over a period of time. Knowledge is a part of wisdom. Knowledge, logic, creativity and common sense blended with experience constitute wisdom.

A 'poet' is a person who creates beauty through his imagination. A 'scholar' is a person who possesses in-depth knowledge in his subject. An 'intellectual' is a person who is good in his logic and experience.

May it be Geography, Oceanography, Sociology, Mathematics, Criminal Psychology, Astronomy, or any other subject, knowledge is an ocean. We may not be intellectuals or scholars. But at least, one should know his subject to certain extent thoroughly. A computer student should know the difference between ROM and RAM, a graduate in English should be able to tell the name of the writer of 'Ode to a nightingale', a botany student... the difference between 'root' and 'stem', a Telugu literature student... 'Who is Pothana'; and a Theatre Art student... 'Who is Eugene Inesco'! A student of Psychiatry should be able to explain the difference between 'Idiocy' and 'Stupidity' and an economics student should know the 'Marshal's theory of marginal utility'. A student should not only be thorough with his own subject, but should

know at least the fundamental concepts of some other subjects also.

Analysing the question is commonsense, knowing the correct answer is knowledge and answering the question in a correct manner is reflex-action.

Basing on Knowledge, IQ, Reflex-Action and Common Sense, psychologists place a person at different levels on the scale of wisdom. Our society consists of various categories of people in the following ratio: Blockheads 2%; Idiots: 2.5%; Stupid: 7% Dull heads: 10%: Average people: 48%; People above average level: 18%; Intelligent: 11%; Geniuses: 1.5%.

Wisdom, enthusiasm and anthropology:

A mother said:
On my child's birth, the sky Gods asked
"We want to bestow your baby with a gift.
Ask for the best"
Folding my hands I requested,
"Give my child ambition to acquire
Enthusiasm that leads to Wisdom"

Science is an organised knowledge. Wisdom is organised life. Knowledge speaks. But wisdom listens. Education helps a student to develop wisdom and makes him a refined human being. It encourages enthusiasm to lead a more enjoyable life. As discussed earlier, desire makes the mankind intelligent and more passionate to learn new things. To make his food more delicious, he came up with the 'concept of

boiling'. Inventing salt is one of the greatest finds in those days. He learnt how to cook biryani (a word, derived from the Persian word 'birian', which means fried before cooking). Taste and Beauty became a part of his culture.

How many of us know that Leonardo Da Vinci designed the scissors for haircut.

Not content with 'coal', man came up with 'electricity'! Then he found the Atomic energy! Next was the era of electronics! He continued to discover and his aspiration for development never seems quenching.

'Drilling oil from earth? Just impossible' said the people in 1860s. 'Telephone has many shortcomings to be seriously considered as part of communication', was the opinion in 1870. 'Computers may weigh not more that 1.5 tons' said a scientist in 1950s. Even Bill gates opined in 1981 that 640K ought to be enough for anybody.

People were thrilled whenever a new product is invented...! They were ecstatic...! Unlike animals, human race is continuously searching various ways to lead a more blissful life. And this is all education.

Difference between man and animal: Precisely they can be summarised into three. 1. Human beings have intellectual knowledge and reasoning power whereas animals have only instinctive knowledge and no reasoning power. 2. Human beings eat to live and have feelings for others, whereas animals live to eat and have no other feelings. 3. Men act with developed skills, whereas animals act with the in-born skills.

If a newborn Spider or Woodpecker is kept in total isolation for 10 days and then left freely, the spider moves to the corner of a wall and prepares a web to catch its food. Same way, the baby woodpecker takes off to a tree and starts pecking its stem for

insects. Nobody teaches them the skills to earn their food. The baby crocodile, on emerging out from the shell, instantly proceeds towards water-source (hydro-tropism). An infant butterfly flies in the direction of a flower (odo-tropism). It is by their intuition they acquire these skills.

Human beings do not possess such in-born instincts. After keeping a newborn baby in isolation for a year, if left alone in a forest, he does not know what his food is. He runs away from a rabbit and embraces a tiger. He never realises how to eat his food unless he is trained. He never knows how to cultivate unless somebody teaches him.

But look at the same scenario from a different angle. History proves that the I.Q. level of no animal has increased even a bit for millions of years. It is stagnant at the level of their basic food acquiring capacity only. No animal thinks of adding taste to its food, leave alone preparing ice creams. Contrary to it, the human being has steadily developed from the ancient technique of using an arrow to the present stage of firing a missile.

Go through the graph again. Till the age of 15 or 20, man 'learns' from others and later 'develops' his own intelligence further. Unlike the animal, man has no boundaries to enhance his wisdom. Take the examples of Newton, Einstein, Graham Bell, Mokshgundam Visweswarayya, Darwin and C.V. Raman. They had first learnt from their mothers, fathers, and gurus and then, on their own. They reached the peaks. 'Unlimited wisdom' is the greatest gift that nature has given only to the human beings. To which heights a man can reach, depends on his learning, desire and application.

The desire, skill and wisdom: Michel Angelo, the greatest painter world has ever produced was to paint on the ceiling of a very famous church in London. As he had to station horizontally on a stretcher for two years to paint the ceiling, he was affected by a deadly decease called Lumbago. He was unable to sit or stand.

On dooms day the British Queen was to inaugurate the newly renovated church. Before her arrival, Michel Angelo went for final inspection. On a remote corner of the roof he found an odd combination of colours, not to his satisfaction. He wanted his assistant to arrange a stretcher again. With lumbago, it was a very painful exercise to reach the top and repaint it. After completion, his assistant asked him, "Why did you take such a risk? The queen would not detect it. In fact, there is no mistake. It was a wrong colour-combination and even we are not aware of it. Who will notice it?" Michel Angelo was silent for a moment and said, "I".

Animals have neither wisdom and skill nor desire. We will discuss about the concept 'wisdom' at a later stage. With regard to 'skill', one of the greatest inventions of the human brain is the screwdriver. It was the stepping-stone for developing various other mechanical skills.

Animals may possess certain skills but they are bestowed by nature only. No animal can tie a knot. No animal is capable of playing a musical instrument. It can neither make a sculpture nor prepare a sweet. It has no desire to play games, eat delicious food or go for a picnic. Thus, the three qualities that differentiate us with animals are: wisdom, skill and desire. We all possess the three qualities, but interestingly in different proportions, leading to different virtues. The following diagram illustrates the said concept more clearly.

Depending on the mixture, people can be categorised into three groups.

First group: People having wisdom and skill but no desire to take risk belong to the first group and are symbolically termed as Motor mechanics.

Suppose you have a scooter to be repaired. You go to a mechanic, who is excellent in his job. By a simple check-up, he locates the fault. And that is his wisdom. He repairs it in minutes. It is skill. You give him the money and if ask him what does he do with it, he says, "I give this to my boss."

You ask him, "Where is he?"

He may say, "He is in a bar, drinking and never comes to the garage."

Surprised, you ask him, "You did the entire job. Why give him the money?"

"He is the owner" he replies, "He pays rent for the shed and gives my salary"

"But you are earning the revenue for his bar bill, his shop rent and more particularly your salary also."

"I don't know. I never thought of that. I am contented".

People belonging to this category satisfy themselves, working for Bill Gates rather than thinking of becoming Bill Gates. They don't want to take any risk. They never think that there is also a risk in working for Bill Gates. Their time is not in their hands. In spite of having the skill and intelligence, they have no desire to own themselves.

I do not mean every body should start their own business. I just want to stress that one should know his strengths and assess his future for betterment. It is like developing own brand name. Contentment is different from satisfaction. A contended person is never unsatisfied. He never fells jealous of others. If a person who is ambitious but cannot fulfil his desires cannot claim to be contended.

Second group: People belonging to this category have cheating mentality. They have the desire and skill but not the wisdom. To accomplish their desire, like Harshad Mehta, they cheat the public or kill the people like Bin Laden. They die in jail, or live in exile, as they do not have the wisdom.

Third group: A person who does not possess the requisite skills, but have unfulfilled desires talks like: "If I am the Prime Minister of India, I can settle the Kashmir issue in five minutes". People of this nature have their opinion on every subject and are bubbling with unnecessary wisdom. We can find them chatting with friends and

strangers 'alike' in buses, railway compartments and at marriage functions. They are called Soapbox Orators. A student who unnecessarily gossips cannot be a ranker.

Tune the brain: Mind acts according to how we tune it. The purpose of education is to 'tune' the brain for a better purpose. You know that wise people in problems have better shock-absorbing power than others. Tuning has great impact on our thinking, aptitude behaviour and psychology. Tuning is of three types.

1. Permanent: Our culture, customs, moral values and beliefs have an impact on our 'permanent' tuning. For example, we fold our hands before elders to show our respect towards them. It is our custom. Certain people while going out on certain work, turn back into their houses, if a cat or widow comes opposite them. These are age-old beliefs. Thus beliefs and traditions tune our brain. Many of our old customs are good but some may not stand for logic. A successful tunes his brain pro-logic and discards superstitions.

2. Temporary: Take the example of a terrorist. He is made to believe that sacrificing for a cause is the best thing that could happen in his life. He is stupefied, enthralled and mesmerised. He willingly becomes a 'suicide bomber' killing many innocents. The impact may be for a shorter term. He may come out of the hypnosis at a later stage. But the influence is powerful. It is temporary tuning. Another best example is the suicide death of a student on his failure. His brain is motivated by a temporary influence, and in a fit of frustration, he commits suicide. He would live long if he had postponed his act just for few hours.

3. Self: Self-tuning discriminates successful people with others. A successful person is controlled by his 'brain' but not by his heart. He loves what he chooses to love. He knows his target and his objectives. He loves not only his target but also the route to reach his target. Take the example of a student, who wants to become a doctor/ engineer/ business executive. It's his desire. To reach his goal, he should have interest in Sciences/ Mathematics/ Commerce. Unfortunately some students have a desire, but no interest. A student is wasting 18 years of his prime life if he feels that education is an inevitable responsibility thrust on him. For such students there are always pretty attractions (like Movies, TV. etc) waiting to grab them. It is not the case with a self-tuned person. He dictates terms to his brain, controls his amygdale. He is under nobody's undue influence and derives satisfaction in his studies.

Pavlov's theory of reflex-actions: Education also helps us to control our reflex actions. A scientist by name Pavlov has experimented on the sensory organs of various living creatures and found that all they are all inter-linked. He kept a piece of mutton in front of a dog. Naturally its month started watering. When it was eating, he kept on ringing a bell. After several days of training, even without a mutton piece, the dog's mouth watered when it heard the sound of the bell. Later, he started giving small voltage of a battery shock when the dog was eating and continued the sounds of the bell. After training, when the dog heard the bell, it started hopping, imagining an electric shock. Pavlov thus found that the five sensory organs are inter-related. For his great work on reflex-actions, Pavlov was awarded Nobel Prize in 1904.

By adopting the principle of tuning our sensory organs, we can change our entire attitude. We can simply grin in a situation where we are accustomed to blow up in irritation. We can control our tension before appearing for an examination. Enlarge our attentiveness in fearful situations.

Try to smile when you are supposed to be angry. This appears to be difficult propositions in the initial stages. But all the sensory organs are inter-dependent. On my self-experience I guarantee you that, if you practice smiling and control your emotions, slowly over a period of time you will get rid of negative emotions like rage, tension and frustration. This is called emotional intelligence.

We will discuss in detail at a later stage, the techniques of tuning the five sensory organs to develop concentration and emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence: Education develops your emotional intelligence. Imagine a situation where you have lost your purse in a remote village and you knew nobody there. Instead of brooding over the matter or becoming panic, you should think various ways to come out of the problem.

Emotional intelligence means how perfectly, positively and skilfully you react to a crucial situation... or in a conflict... or in a conversation... or under tension. Emotional intelligence preaches self-control, discipline, restraint, concentration and composure.

Sometimes, a person has to decide between his emotions and duties. Suppose a lady, on her husband's death has to take the burden of her family. She has to control her

emotions and immediately undertake the duty of running the family. Imagine a student whose duty is to write the exam. If he loses his emotional balance and is tensed up, he cannot validate his duty. Without emotional balance, you are bound to lose your mental power under tension.

Our brain has a lot of untapped latent power. Imagine holding a glass of water weighing 100 grams. After half an hour you somehow feel that it is gaining weight and you cannot hold it further. After one hour it would be weighing one ton. But does it gain weight? No. Your capacity to hold it is reduced. At this juncture if somebody offers you thousand rupees for every minute you hold it further, you try to continue your effort. From where did you gain the strength? It is in you... hidden and untapped!

Take the example of the devotees of Swami Ayyappa. They hold the irumudi (divine articles) on their head and walk miles. From where do they get their inner strength? It is from their mind-power. This is where tuning plays a big role.

Negative tuning plays a reverse role. At the early stage of your life, if you implant the seeds of inferiority complex, fear of public speaking, or lack of memory, they grow with your age. By changing your attitude, you can come out of your hypothetical, imaginary and self-created deficiencies. Good education tells you how to develop such an attitude.

Concentration and meditation: You might have read a story from Mahabharata. Dronacharya wanted to test the skills of his students Arjuna and Duryodhana in archery. He set a target of hitting a bird's eye. The bird was on a branch of a tree. First he asked Duryodhana, "What are you looking at?" Duryodhana said that he was looking at the tree, its branch, and a bird on it and the bird's eye. When he asked the same question, Arjuna replied, "Nothing is visible to me except the bird's eye".

That's why he became one of the best in archery. But as we have studied earlier, it is not adequate nowadays to be one of the best. One should be the 'Best of the Best'.

If the same situation occurs to a modern Arjuna, when his guru asks him what he is looking at, he (Arjuna) will not be in a position to hear his guru's words. Even if the Guru pats on his back, his skin also does not respond the touch. All his five sensory organs are concerted on the bird's eye only. And this is called meditation.

The word meditation sounds big, when you do not understand the real meaning. Meditation does not mean closing your eyes and nose. It means enjoying the current experience in depth both mentally and physically. We all unknowingly meditate in certain fascination situations.

Meditation means concentrating on hair while combing, focussing on the book while reading. One should develop such a quality in every aspect of life. When you go to a picnic enjoy the experience thoroughly. While driving your vehicle, enjoy the drive. When you eat, relish the taste of the food. Good experience is the best gift you give to yourself.

Once you start practicing the said technique, implement it to your studies. When you start reading a book, start with attention. Gradually you reach a stage of cogitation wherein you cease to hear the sounds around you. Nothing would be able to distract your attention. Your brain, like a computer starts receiving the matter. If you attain this state of mind by practice, it is enough if you read the subject once. This is called "ekasanthagrahyatha".

Creation and recreation: Should a student postpone his childhood pleasures for education? This merits a detailed explanation. Elders curb you from watching movies and television. Restrictions are hard to digest. Yes. But you have to invest your childhood for a better future. You have to postpone certain 'non-commercial' recreations. That does not mean that you are suffering. I used the word non-commercial recreation. It again requires some more explanation.

Recreation is of two types. One is at the seller's market and the other is at buyer's market. Many people recreate themselves at the buyers' market. They pay for their recreation. They spend most of their time to enjoy it. Over a period of time it becomes a vice. Let us suppose you want to read a comic book. You buy the book and read it. In other words you are paying for your 'recreation'. Slowly you get addicted to it. But suppose you draw a cartoon and send it to the same magazine. You receive some money for it.

As I said in my preface, a boy reads a 'cartoon magazine' and derives happiness. Another creates cartoon and derives pleasure. There is no doubt that they both get the same pleasure. But the second boy is benefited psychologically and monetarily / commercially also. At a later stage, it may become his profession. See the difference. Pleasure being the same, the second boy is more benefited. After ten years, the first

boy is still a watcher, and the second boy... a performer.

A player stepping into a playground, an actor facing the camera, a writer involved in writing a script, a singer before the mike, enjoy more pleasure than the watchers. The standing ovation gives them the most satisfying experience. Try to be in that group. Don't get trapped by the Buyer's market. Imagine yourself a fine I.A.S. officer, going to represent your district before the Chief Minister. Imagine yourself a top class doctor chosen for an award by W.H.O. Once you understand the said concept, and start enjoying the real success in 'performing', however small may that be, normal recreation ceases to satisfy you. You want to be a performer.

That does not mean that you must never enjoy a cartoon or play cricket. You must be able to prioritise your desires and be in a position to choose, rather than being a slave to them.

I noticed my son spending more than an hour with his friends standing at a four-road junction opposite to our house everyday after coming from the school. He was 15 then. He could have conversed with them in his study room, but normally children of that age are prone to converse on the wayside. I bought some shares and asked him to get into a part-time business. I subscribed to the 'The Economic Times' newspaper. Slowly his daily routine changed, as the value of the stocks increased. He started coming home early to study the stock market. A stage came when he started enjoying his business. The experience of earning the pocket money was more gratifying than having a chat with his friends. He felt that he was a cut above his friends. Business has become his re-creation. Later, one fine morning he lost everything, thanks to Harshad Mehta. I asked him not to worry. There is no better teacher than experience. He started to deal with shares again.

I advocate this theory 'Education with entertainment' in all my personality development classes. "Iron rusts from disuse, stagnant water loses its purity, and in cold weather even air becomes frozen, and so does inaction. It weakens the vigour of the mind," said Leonardo Vinci.

Whenever you are free, indulge in mental exercise. Mental exercise may include reciting Z to A, explaining your younger brother or sister why the sea-waves crash into the shores, how an electrical cooker automatically switches off after cooking. You conduct a mock interview, sketch your bedroom without observing it, recollect the events on your previous birthday, or sum up your achievements during the

previous year.

'Creation' and 'Recreation' are different words but they mean the same. Surprised? Let us analyse. What do you mean by creation? Finding out a new concept...! Isn't it? Education means understanding a concept originally discovered by others (for example we study about the gravity of earth... by Newton). By studying it, we are 'recreating' it again in our mind.

Recreation in other sense is 'pleasure'.

One creates the game of cricket and we play it. One writes a drama and we enact it. It is all recreation. Consider your education also to be a recreation. If you solve a problem and finally get the right answer, you derive the same pleasure equal to that of making a goal in a football match or hitting a six in cricket. Once you get used to this concept, this pleasure keeps your neurons always fresh.

Consider the funny idea of taping the entire one-day cricket match and watching it later by fast forwarding the advertisements and completing the show within four hours rather than wasting the time from morning till evening. Think of new concepts. How about showing films in a railway chair car compartment, or selling cinema tickets at reduced rates to fill up the vacant seats in the last minute (like the tickets sold at reduced rates in certain flights before their departure)? Constant mental exercise sharpens you mind and gives you the stamina and you would be able to concentrate better in whatever you do.

Let us suppose that on Sunday morning there is a good 'cartoon' serial. You have a cricket match at the same time. Would you feel sorry for missing your TV serial? No. You enjoy both equally. Hence you don't feel sorry for sacrificing one for another. If you develop the same concept towards education (which is your profession) your childhood also turns out to be refreshing. Take the example of great players. They never moan to go to the playground in a chilly winter morning or summer afternoon for practice. If your profession is 'studying', take pleasure in it. There is no way out.

The divine book:

Perform your duty
Whole-heartedly
Thy not expect the result.

Enjoy the work
Just by doing it
And the result is a bonus.
And that is... Bhagavad-Gita!

History has produced various philosophies to make our living styles better. One among them is 'Bhagavad-Gita', which advocates that 'The ideal worshipper, while not neglecting his duty, will play his part, setting the result aside'. It substantiates the above three steps.

The said theory can better be understood with the example of a gardener. He enjoys the fresh scent of dry earth turning wet, when he is watering it. He takes pleasure in watching the small white buds blossoming into full flowers on the top of the bushes. He loves the fragrance of those shootouts and the aroma of flowers as they blossom. Finally he sells the flowers. The entire process of his work is a pleasure and the end result is only a 'bonus'.

Genius is nothing more than inflamed enthusiasm. This is the philosophy of Bhagavad-Gita. Take the example of your sports. While playing cricket you enjoy the thrill. You love to sweat. Winning the game is only a bonus. Same way, you enjoy your studies, work smart and concentrate. And the result is a bonus. Be enthusiastic.

A boy asked Gandhi, "I want to become a great person like you. From where should I start?" Mahatma simply said, "From loving your work".

Unfortunately many of us love only our final targets, but not the travel. It mainly applies to the students. Then why some students are not interested in studies? The reason may be that they have more interesting and luring things such as gossiping,

chatting, games and Telly.

Life is so small. It is meant to enjoy, safeguarding your future. And that is your motto.

Construction of Rest houses: People say life is short. It is not. The tragedy is that we wait so long to begin it and we end it early. We start carrying out our job to earn money, comforts and fame. We try to stop the journey as early as possible by building a rest house.

But life is like a bicycle. The moment we stop pedalling, we fall. Many of us consider that 'falling' from the cycle' is taking 'rest' happily.

Some people build their rest houses at 'failure'. Some other students stand at the crossroads and never begin their journey as they are confused at the different paths that are open to them to take / tread. They postpone under the pretext of 'un-fair weather conditions' or for 'fear of failure'. They keep the dream boxes under their pillow and sleep on it for a lifetime.

Some others leave everything to either God or Karma to finish. These people do not understand that in order to complete there should be a beginning. That, which is not begun... cannot be completed even by God or Karma for that matter. There are some other students. They build their rest houses whenever there is anguish, pain and distress. They withdraw into these caves (rest houses) and stop working. You can find lot of pessimism and anguish in their conversations and behaviour.

Some people build their house at their target point. You may be confused as to what is wrong in building a rest house at target point. No. There is no end to success. It's a process. The closer one gets to the top, the more one finds there is no 'top'. People like Gandhi, Mandela, Martin Luther King and Mother Theresa never rested in their houses. They worked till their death and died 'young' at eighties. They proved that life is a gift to us.

The Angel's gift:

Middle of the night every day...An angel descends from the fairyland... Gives each of us a clean white paper to write and return next day, with our pleasant experiences, our dreams fulfilled and wisdom earned...But we return it blackening....With stokes of defeats, sorrows and unfulfilled desires.

Why? There are two reasons. First: we don't possess the ambition. Second: may be we do not have power to fulfil the ambition as we spend our energies on useless other temptations.

Why we study:

My lecture to the young students on 'The Art of Studying' starts with a question: "Why you want to study?" They fumble to answer immediately, and think for a while. Then various answers pour in. "To get a job... to earn money ... knowledge, reputation ... to get dowry (Smiles)". Some students are frank enough to say that their parents thrust it upon them. For my next question, "Why you want to play cricket?" they readily answer, "We love it. It's thrilling".

"Do you feel happy when a cricket match is abandoned due to rain?" And the answer pulsates: "No".

"How do you feel if an unexpected holiday is declared to your school due to heavy rain? Happy?" Even before my question is completed, the room vibrates, "Yes". Again I ask the same question: "Then why are you studying?" The answer is hushed silence.

For their age it's a difficult question to answer. Enjoy your study rather than viewing it as a burden, thrust upon you by your parents. Education is a process of living and not a hard preparation for future living. When you cannot enjoy your job, you cannot concentrate on it. Before sleep, one should think, 'Today is my most pleasant day'. Unfortunately we think of problems that started yesterday and happiness that may lie in tomorrow.

Picasso said that he felt tired whenever he does not work. When the renowned photographer Andy Hall was asked how could he bring out such excellent works, he replied 'I love to click one thousand of them and throw away 999'.

Acquiring wisdom should be as enthusiastic as a sport. Enjoying while solving mathematical puzzles, taking pleasure in delightful ancient poetry, discussing complicated legal laws and reading scientific fiction should make you feel that 'acquiring knowledge is also as amusing as an entertainer'. Once you harmonise, you find yourself different from others. Then you study... for pleasure!

Some students do not put their efforts in studies and take life easy, considering that there is no instantaneous incentive for strenuous study. Of course, there are no immediate rewards for hard work and one has to wait. It is called 'breakthrough'.

My lyricist friend, who charges at present Rupees one million for penning the songs for a film, was paid 116 for his first song. I was paid Rs. 40 per week for my most successful commercial serial 'Thulasidalam' Ian Fleming, creator of James Bond signed for 600 dollars for his story 'Dr. No.' and was not paid one penny extra even when the film collected 3 Billion dollars. Later he earned same amount of royalty through his books. The remuneration to Amitab Bachan, who earns ten million per day, was 5,000 rupees for his first film, 'Sath Hindustani' for his 3 months work.

Investment: Every person has some exciting but unproductive desires. Common man prioritises them and the wise man knows 'when' to accomplish them. A student in the intermediate stage of his life should know that education is the best investment for a prosperous future. Unfortunately there would be many other tempting alternatives and he should take guard against them.

Once Bernard Shaw was in a party. Everybody except him was dancing. A lady asked him, 'Don't you wish to dance?' He replied, "I like it immensely. But I am thinking about a book that I am writing."

Unsatisfied with his answer, she enquired, "Why don't you think about it while dancing?"

"Yes. I can, but don't want to"

'You are fearful." She mocked. "May be" he said passively. She jeered, "You don't know how to enjoy life".

He also smiled and then clarified, "I want to enjoy writing rather than dancing. For that matter, dancing gives me more ecstasy and kick". He paused a while and said, "But writing gives me the pleasure, money, fame and ultimate satisfaction. Once I go for the kicks, I fear I have no capacity like you to come out of the bliss and earn my other virtues".

Every student has to understand his statement how to prioritise between an interest, action and commitment.

The motto of a student should be, as our President says, first to dream and next try to fulfil the dream. Visualise a phone call at the late night. A car comes to pick you up to the airport. A helicopter is waiting for you. You are flown directly to Delhi. You are the best surgeon in the country and the chief advisor to the medical team attending on the Prime minister.

Imagine winning a noble prize in physics or an Oscar award, and your photo coming in the front page of all Indian papers. Visualise becoming an engineer like Mokshagundam Visweswarayya, and Prime minister taking your advice on the probability of linking all Indian rivers. Imagine becoming chief management consultant to Bill Gates or yourself becoming another Ambani.

Optimism knows what the tips are, but success knows where the pits are. Know the pits first. With a modus operandi, you can cross them. Parents don't know and the teachers never teach these techniques.

Hence this book.

In brief...

- **This chapter deals with the value of education. The single purpose of education is for a better living.**

- **Knowledge means gaining a necessary thing everyday. Wisdom is loosing an unnecessary thing every minudte.**
- **You develop emotional intelligence and can tune your brain for better results through education.**
- **Never loose enthusiasm in life.**
- **Work is pleasure. Resulting gain is just a bonus. Don't work with pain, just for a happy result. The ultimate first class result is not happiness. The process of educating yourself is the happiness.**

TWO STAGES

We do not grow absolutely,
Or chronologically
We grow sometimes in one dimension
And not in another!
We are relative!
We are mature in one realm,
Childish in another..!
To exist is to change,
To change is to mature
To mature is
To go-on creating oneself endlessly.

We all grow from nothing to something. And that is success; depending on to which heights we grow. There are two phases in success. Overcoming problems being the first, availing the opportunities is the next. Unless you overcome your weaknesses, you cannot avail your openings. Unless you utilise your opportunities, you can never become No. 1. And who is Number One? When I released my Telugu book, "Mind power: How to be No. One", my friend asked the same question.

According to me, 'A person who sleeps well at night is number one'. Sounds simple but it needs a little bit of explanation. Who can sleep well? According to me, a person who doesn't have problems or who is confident of solving them sleeps well. In other words, a person who is not jealous of others and is happy with his way of living and confident of future sleeps well. It requires smart work, a sense of belonging and concentration.

Here is a real story. A half-century ago, people thought that it was impossible to run a mile in 4 minutes. In 1954 Roger Bannister achieved it and created a gunnies book world record. Surprisingly, within one year at least ten sprinters could make it. And that is challenging your core competence.

A young boy wanted to participate in a five hundred-metre race. His first priority was to win the medal. He controlled his diet. Exercised regularly. He practiced day and night. The destined day came. As the pistol sound reverberated in the air, he started running. He ran and ran and just ran. Except finish line, he saw nothing. There were five rounds. As he completed the final round and about to cross the finish line, there was tremendous applause from the crowds. He raised his head and saw that four of the contenders have already crossed the finish line. He was totally upset and tears began to well up in his eyes. Then suddenly he saw the organisers running towards him to congratulate.

Surprised he asked, "But they are ahead of me".

They clarified, "Those boys are still in the fourth round. The clapping is for you"

Many people dream of success... but few wake up to work for it. It is for you to decide whether you want to be a dreamer or an achiever. To initiate is tough. To wake up from laziness is difficult. Once you make your first step, you find it interesting.

Parents without thinking, and not knowing the meaning of it, suggest the child to 'work hard'. They think that anyone who works hard acquires 'intelligence'. And the further understanding is, who ever works hard has a 'pleasurable life'.

With this attitude, right from the childhood, they persuade their children, "Study Hard for your public exam... work hard for Engineering/ Medical Entrance Test.... your duty is to rise up to our expectations... life is going to be miserable unless you study hard... you have to forego your games and sleep to avoid a tumultuous

future..."

These (auto) suggestions make children feel that education is a strenuous exercise. They perceive that for a satisfactory future, they have to go through this tiring procedure. They take it as a responsibility and a ritual to please their parents, suffering the student life. One should live 'with' present satisfaction, but not 'for' future satisfaction. There is no way to happiness. Happiness is the way. You should not only enjoy fixing a flag on Mount Everest, but climbing the mountain also.

THE MOUNT EVEREST CONCEPT:

A mountaineer
Not only enjoys
Climbing to the summit
And hoisting
His nation's flag there,
But enjoys the trekking too
Though the journey is
Arduous.

Life is also like a journey. Acquiring knowledge is like climbing Mount Everest. Initially difficult, but once you begin to acquire knowledge, you will enjoy every moment of the constant hunt and chase for it.

A student, who wants to become a high-fly and powerful executive in future, but not

happy with his present day studies... turns melancholic, wasting his productive youth. This is the reason why he lacks concentration. Unfortunately many of us love our final destinations, but not the journey.

To shed my weight I joined a yoga centre. But everyday, as the time was approaching, I was searching for many 'valid' reasons to avoid attending the class. It means I have an interest in becoming slim and healthy, but I did not like the exercises. Somehow I did continue to attend the classes and once I noticed the results and felt myself 'light' I started liking it. This applies to you and your studies too.

The Titanic: In my introductory lecture to students on 'Why Study' I compare life with a journey from a valley to Mount Everest. Then I ask the students, 'But what is there on Mount Everest? Why should we climb there?' To give them a clue, I give them a hint.

"Let us suppose you were on a ship like Titanic. Unfortunately it met with an accident. You know swimming. You swim to the nearest land. This is a beautiful island, adorned with gorgeous waterfalls, mountains, rivers, flowers, peacocks, deer and rabbits... but no snakes or anaconda or cruel animals like lions and tigers. You can sleep well till late in the morning, there is no one to wake you up rushing you to begin to study. You can have your bath in the nearby by waterfalls for hours together and go to a lake for fishing. After lunch you can sleep in the afternoon. Then go for a walk on the seashore in the evening. For your lunch and dinner, if you are a vegetarian, you can have a variety of fruits and if you are a non-vegetarian you can feast on 'Rabbit 65' or 'Deer Manchuria".

As they are smiling, I ask them, "If you believe that we labour hard throughout our life for food and security, both are available there in plenty without a need to work. There are two options for you: Staying permanently there or Coming back. Which one do you choose?"

After a brief silence, when everybody is prepared to decide on the second option, a student hesitatingly replies, "I prefer staying there".

"Why?"

He says he fancies living in peace throughout his life. With a genuine tone I ask him

"Do you have any bad debts? Mentally disturbed? Or... are you married?" Confused with the unexpected question, he says "No". I shoot my next doubt, "Then why there is no peace in your life?" He shyly smiles.

Shifting gears moving them into a humorous mood, I prompt them to identify the reasons that motivate them to come back to the civilized world.

"...If any animal were to be in a similar situation, it would never think of coming back from the said island, as there is no threat to its life. It considers the situation to be the most fortunate because food is abundantly available, but what about us? We do 'not' live for food and security alone. We want to work smart and take risks. But work for what, towards what end?"

For their age it is not an easy question to answer immediately, but they finally arrive at four main attractions that pull them back to this ivilized world. Then I add last two more to them.

People and their Love (Prema)

Fame and Recognition (Keerthi).

Comforts and luxuries (Aiswarya)

Enthusiasm and Variety (Desire).

Doctors and medicines (Arogya).

Wisdom and knowledge (Jnana).

A person should acquire the above six 'Riches' in his life. They are called 'Shadguna Aiswaryas'. If anybody asks you, for what purpose are you studying, you should proudly and confidently say, that you live to achieve the six types of wealth above mentioned.

In the said island, there is nobody to talk. We want to communicate. We live to love and to be loved. Secondly, there is no scope for any achievement and success. There is nobody in the island to ivilized our achievements and hence no ego satisfaction. Similarly, we want to enjoy luxuries or at least comforts like fridge and a fan. In an island, there is no variety. Variety is the spice of human life. There are no music or sports channels. Life is a routine rut there. Above all, no doctors are there to look

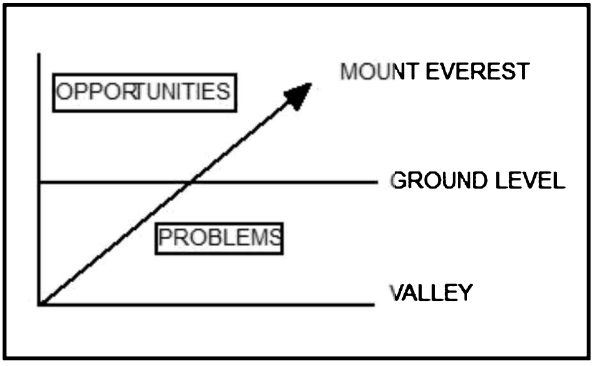
after our health. We have to live there like a cave man without any wisdom.

If an animal were left in such an island, it would be a happiest creature as there is no threat to its life and food is abundantly available. Unlike animals, in spite of problems and worries, we prefer to stay in the ivilized world and want to expand our wisdom, fame and riches to satisfy our ego. Hence we can conclude that a person is comparable to an animal if he simply lives to eat.

The Concept of a Valley: The concept of valley requires an explanation. As said earlier, we start our lives from a valley and our aim is to reach Mount Everest. All of us are not born with silver spoons. We may have begun our studies with ill equipped schools, poor teaching facilities, ill equipped laboratories, unqualified and unmotivated teachers, substandard furniture, and inhospitable environments. This is because many of us may not have come from highly rich families. Vices of a parent, ill health during childhood, lack of affection from one of the parents, unpleasant atmosphere at home, frequent quarrels by parents etc constitute the valley. Added to them, there are our in-built and acquired weaknesses. From valley we have to reach Mount Everest. But to climb Everest we need ropes, shoes with spikes and other mountaineering gear and they are available only at the Supermarket, at the ground level zero. That means, from valley we should first reach the ground level, acquire the equipment and proceed further.

After reaching the ground level, some people prefer to stay at the ground level, by putting up a rest house there. They are called 'commoners'. Commoners are happy to lead a routine and mundane life, a life without any problems. 'Performers' rise above the ground level to avail the opportunities and reach Mount Everest. Performers always look upon to acquire shadguna aiswaryas. Decide whether you want to remain a commoner or become a performer. With this in mind, let us name these two phases... from valley to ground level as 'problem phase' and from ground level to the peak as 'opportunities phase'.

THE PROBLEM PHASE



It is not because
Things are difficult
That we do not dare!
But it is because
We do not dare,
Things
Become difficult.

Believe the above quotation and we can embark on analysing the 'problem phase' of our life.

Start doing what's necessary; then do things that you think are possible; and then you will discover yourself doing the greatest impossible.

Success simply doesn't 'happen'. It is organized, anticipated and accomplished by concerted smart work.

Nature places the goal, one step of us. Winners are those people who do not 'tire' by stepping forward. The difference between a winner and a looser is that the winner works for one more extra second than looser. Winners take pleasure in climbing, whereas commoners have it in resting.

To climb up from the valley to the ground 'zero' level, we cannot take help of any equipment because we do not have any. This is the stage where we need to fight our weaknesses, without any help from anyone else and everything 'on our own'. This is where we need to compete with students who studied in comfort and with greater facilities. Normally, we presume that we suffer with the following problems.

- Anger
- Shyness
- Laziness
- Belief in all
- Sensitiveness
- Fear and tension
- Inferiority complex
- Insecurity about future
- Lack of peace of mind
- Failure to speak in public
- Lack of attention and memory

Look at the list again. Are they problems or weakness? Suppose a student meets with an accident before his exam. It's a problem. Loosing hall ticket one day before the theory test is a problem. But those mentioned in the list above are not problems; they are weaknesses... that we created ourselves!

Try to differentiate between a problem and a weakness. May be it is difficult to overcome our problems such as money and health. But with a little determination we can certainly overcome our weaknesses. If you believe that you can never come out of your weakness, perhaps you never will.

A patient went to psychiatrist and said, "Doctor, I died yesterday".

The doctor was shocked, but as was familiar with the patients of this sort, tried to convince him that he was not dead. After failing to convince him for long time the disgusted doctor took a needle and pierced it into his finger and asked, "Do dead men bleed?"

The patient judiciously said, "No".

The doctor removed the needle and showed the oozing blood. "See, you are not dead".

The patient appeared to have been confused.

"Now what do you say?" the doctor smiled triumphantly. The patient looked at the doctor and then at his forefinger and said, "Doctor, now I come to know that even dead men bleed".

Morale of the story: The belief of 'being dead' gives the patient more satisfaction than that he is alive and he is reluctant to believe anything else.

There is no disease called lack of concentration and short of memory in any medical science unless you are suffering from Alzheimer or Parkinson's disease. If a student feels that lack of concentration and memory are the reasons for his failure, he is no better than the patient mentioned above. You and you alone can cure yourself because you are your own best doctor.

Both watchers and performers know their weaknesses and problems. Both take a decision to take measures to fight them. Only the latter implement them.

THE OPPORTUNITIES PHASE

Many people miss the opportunity
As it comes in the dress of a labourer
Always ready to work
...It knocks the door,
Which is always open
...But we are hesitant to say, 'come in'.

After reaching the ground level, the performer equips him-self to climb the Everest. Then what tools and equipment does he stuff his knapsack with? This requires a certain detailed explanation.

The first time, when a manufacturing company invited me to be a panel member to interview and recruit candidates for them, no doubt I was thrilled.

Ten years ago, I myself was a candidate facing an interview at State Finance

Corporation. And today I am sitting there on the panel and interviewing the potential candidates for recruitment. Besides I am the director of the company. The long corridors, the row of chairs, the candidates, their anxiousness and my newly stitched suit did not enthuse me but the words of my panel chief did. He had vast experience in finance and cost management. I still remember his words even after twenty years.

He said, "The salary of the selected candidate is going to be around fifty thousand rupees per month, which means the management is paying around 'six hundred thousand' rupees a year to him or her. Considering that s/he works for 30 years for the organisation, the company is paying around 18 million rupees. With interest it works out to 5 crores of rupees. Is he worth it? If he is a rotten egg, he is a misfit and unwelcome into this organisation. If he is a litigant he poisons others. If he is a chatterer, he spoils co-worker's time." He paused, "... this management bestowed in us a confidence worth fifty million rupees to select a candidate and we have to prove our worth in our eight hours of interviewing."

These words still stimulate me. From that day on, every time I am on an interview board, I am reminded of them. It used to be a difficult job in those days, because worthy candidates were very few. After twenty years, still it is a difficult job. Not because the worthy candidates are few... but they are a great many more.

During last one decade, the standards in our education system, particularly in metropolitan institutions and corporate schools have increased enormously. Utilising the sophisticated environment and extraordinary facilities made available to the students by these institutions a section of students get to improve their skills in areas like public speaking, communication, computing and general knowledge. They are more self-confident and do better than some of their counterparts elsewhere. These are the best students.

To compete with the best student, whatever may be your background; you should develop your own skills to become 'best of the bests'.

Four skills: There are six sources and four skills to earn six Aiswaryas. A student derives his wisdom through six sources.

1. Shabda (Listening)

2. Drishya (Seeing)

3. Pariseelana (Observing)

4. Anumana (Questioning)

5. Anubhava (Experiencing)

6. Yochana (Thinking).

Newton saw an apple falling down. He observed and questioned, 'why should it fall on earth?' He thought and experienced the answer and discovered the force of gravitation. He became 'Sir' Isaac Newton. This is wisdom.

Instead of blindly memorising the subjects, if the student, with the help of the above six concepts, is able to develop his skills in the following four areas, he is bound to succeed in life.

1. Intelligence: It means the capacity to acquire and apply knowledge and the 'faculty of thought and reason'. In a lake, the lotus flowers multiply twice everyday. It takes 10 days to cover up the entire lake. On which day will the lake be half full?

2. Memory: It means remembering the subject matter and bringing it out whenever required and applying it to intelligence. Name the countries sharing the Indian borders? Why does ice float on water?

3. Reflex action: It includes the capacity to understand a question quickly and ability to answer in such a way that the other person can understand it. For example: who is the daughter of the mother-in-law of the father of the nation?

4. Concentration: This can be defined as the enthusiasm of a person, reflected in his job. Concentration is the synonym for enthusiasm. It includes you willingness, body language, your attitude, levels of confidence, self-esteem and your fearlessness and above all, your pleasant smile while on your job. With all these virtues, I do not see a reason why cannot you be 'the best of the bests'.

Expertise in these areas is to be built up from student stage. But nobody can acquire hundred percent skills in all areas. One has to identify his skill and develop it. For example a person with good reflex actions would be suitable in marketing line. A medico with concentration and skill may opt to become a neuro-surgeon, and with

good memory would do well as a general medical practitioner. You can observe that university rank holders normally possess all the above four qualities, of course in varied degrees. You may doubt whether the interviewer scrutinises all the above factors to decide a candidate for a particular job. May not be. But by observing the body language and pattern of answering, the skills and the traits can be assessed.

Intelligence is normally associated with logic. For the first question, the answer is 'the lake would be half full on the 9th day, as it would be full next (10th) day'. For the second question, there are seven countries touching Indian border if we consider that the entire Kashmir is ours. For the third question, the answer is Kasturba Gandhi (assuming that she has no sisters).

One should not forget the basics of education after graduating and coming out from the college. Why does ice float on water? Ice floats on water because of the maximum density of water is at 4 degrees and also due to the air bubbles in ice.

With these basics, let us divide the problem phase into three parts and the opportunities phase as four virtues. Let us try to understand how to fight the three devils and develop the four virtues.

In brief:

- **There are two phases in life, Problem phase and Opportunities phase.**
- **Education is to acquire six types of prosperity: Health, Love, Fame, Money, Wisdom and Enthusiasm.**
- **Common man is happy if he does not have any problem on a particular day.**
- **Great people consider problems as challenges and utilise their opportunities.**

THREE DEVILS

Man is
Two inches below the God
And
One inch above the Devil...!
It is he
Who has to choose
Which side he should proceed
Downward or upward.

There are three types of problems and weaknesses that bother the students:

1) 'In-built devils' like Fear, Tension and Anguish.

2) 'Acquired' devils like Anger and Inferiority complex.

3) 'Attractive' devils like Laziness, Procrastination and lack of Attention.

Fear and worry are 'In-built' and come along with birth. A baby cries out of fear. It shows the frustration at the absence of her mother. Anguish is the mode chosen to ventilate frustration. These personality traits are normal but should be controlled when they exceed a certain limit.

Second group includes 'Acquired' problems like Anger and Inferiority complex. You never find a child with absolute anger or inferiority complex in the initial stage. As a baby grows up, its own failures, dissatisfying surroundings and unacceptable behaviour of others irritates her and that transforms into anger.

The third cluster comprises of 'Attractive' weaknesses like Laziness, Lack of Attention and Procrastination. People love to be lazy and procrastinate. They love to daydream, that makes it difficult for them to focus on important issues. They know it. Still they love to dawdle. They love the former (habits) and hate the latter (results). It is a love-hate relationship.

The above categorisation may not be correct in its truest literary sense. It doesn't really matter. What matters is that if we are to improve ourselves and be the 'best of the bests', they should be fought. To overcome any weakness, we should first examine it, dissect it, analyse it and finally destroy it.

Garnold Worthington told once:

When a freshly- graduated student comes to me for a job, I don't ask him what he knows, I don't ask him his grades. I simply give him a hypothetical set of circumstances, and ask how he would respond. Those that find the problems but not the opportunities, I send them with my best wishes. Those that see the opportunities, but not the problems, I send right behind the first. But those who recognise the problems, and the opportunities that arise because of them, I offer them a position on the spot.

Harmful pleasure points: Researches have shown that animals tend to take the smaller 'immediate' reward, rather than wait for a larger 'delayed' pay off. We are different. We go for permanent rewards. Unfortunately certain people go for instant gratification. If we are to maintain our uniqueness of being human beings different from other animals, we should refrain from the following amusements and behavioural patterns. It is much more important especially that students desist from the following four temptations.

1) Temporary pleasures at the cost of major future satisfactions: Examples include disturbing love relationships at the time when the main duty is to concentrate on studies, spending money impulsively as soon as you get it, rather than saving for major and important commitments later.

2) Failure to attend to a current situation, leading to major risks: Examples include delaying to attend to a cough and to go the doctor to have check-up, feeling lazy to buy a textbook that is immediately needed.

3) Missing an important future advantage due to non-rectification of a present error: Best example is not studying well enough to get into a good profession, inability to develop communication skills during student life, not practicing vocabulary in English, inability to practice a pleasant smile etc.

4) Trying to gratify your immediate pleasures leading permanent trouble: Teasing your friend to an extent that you loose his friendship permanently... is one example. At macro level, smoking helps you 'relax' instantaneously but could lead to cancerous diseases. Same way over eating could lead to metabolic disorders.

Addiction and pleasure: May you live all the days in your life. Happiness is your choice. The healthiest people are those who take pleasure in the simplest things. Admire the perfect set of your teeth every time you brush them. While eating concentrate on the food before you... not the TV program. Give in to the pleasures of the taste and enjoy eating when you are at the dining table. Give in to sleep, when you have to compulsorily watch a bad movie.

The best way to take pleasure in life is to imitate nature. Nature has no expectations from us. Unlike our friends (or others whom we consider as our 'loved ones'), who give but also take, Nature gives everything and asks nothing in return..

The pleasure is at its peak when we reach the 'the point of bliss'. Rather than overindulge in a state of bliss, let us moderate our consumption of things we enjoy. This self-regulation helps us to maintain a balanced life and come out of our weakness. When our pleasure reaches a notch above the 'point of bliss', we get addicted to it. We become a slave to it. We cease to enjoy it. And that is called 'vice'.

Vices: The term 'addiction' is derived from the Latin word addicere, which means, "Surrender...or give one-self up to something". Addiction implies two characteristics:

1) Irritation as the mind needs an increased requirement for a particular substance.

2) Physical pain or discomfort of the body if the substance is abandoned.

A habit becomes a vice, when not controlled. A vice is initially cultivated as a passion and turns out to be an addiction. Many a times it is initiated by friends as an entertaining pastime and later becomes unavoidable source of relaxation or escape

from our 'emptiness'.

As winter tests tree leaves, summer tests the rivers, vices tests the human beings. But vices are of two types, good and bad.

Morning walk, gardening, reading etc are good ones. Those that harm you either physically or mentally or both are bad ones.

For an 'I am O. K' boy it is perhaps 'macho' to smoke and announce to the world that he is now a man – an adult and a hero. He begins to derive pleasure out of it. At the second stage, it becomes a habit and finally a vice. It may not be a case with everybody but there are fair chances of an initial adventure becoming a vice later.

Coffee is paired with satisfaction, cigarettes with relaxation, alcohol with depression and nail biting with anxiety relief. Later, the body in its wisdom will start to use these habits as a relaxant. With this understanding, it is not surprising that heavy smokers are likely to be more anxious than non-smokers, drunkards more depressed than non-alcoholic.

Some people spend a lifetime searching for hollow happiness and looking for peace in it. They chase idle dreams, addictions, religions and even other people... hoping to fill the emptiness that plagues them. The irony is... the only place they ever needed to search is 'within'.

A person went to a forest to meet a saint and asked him, "People say that you have a wonderful magical coin that anybody owning it would never feel unhappy. Is it true?"

The saint smiled and showed the coin.

"I want it and will pay for the same. Give it to me," asked the stranger. The saint politely refused.

It was getting dark and was hazardous to go back through the woods. The saint offered him to sleep in his hut. The stranger spent a sleepless night since he wanted to own the coin at any cost. While the saint was sleeping, he searched the entire hut but could not find it. In early hours, when the saint went out to morning rituals, he checked even his bed and other belongings, but there was no trace of the coin.

Suspense dominating the guilt, the stranger confessed his misdemeanour and requested the saint to reveal where the coin was. The saint smiled and pulled up the pillow, on which the stranger slept the entire night. To his astonishment, the coin was right under his headrest.

"You have searched everywhere except here", said the saint to the humiliated stranger. "People go all over the places looking for peace and pleasure, not being aware of the truth that it dwells in their mind."

Bad addictions are of two types. Smoking, drug addiction, alcohol and gambling are more harmful vices on one side, while not capable of sleeping without a fan or without a regular 'dose' of movie watching, loud whistling, raucous singing in the bathrooms, though less dangerous, are still addictions on the other side.

Why do you think some housewives are engrossed in watching TV serials where the heroine is either managing director of a multinational company at the age of twenty, or inhumanly harassed by her barbaric mother-in-law? It is because the former is their unfulfilled wish and latter is the satisfactory feeling that they are not exposed to such cruelty. Both help in releasing the adrenaline. It is the same way students are addicted to films to identify themselves with the characters. It releases their adrenalin. But as alcohol is injurious is to the body, excessive indulgence in watching movies is injurious to a student's mind. With this introduction, let us discuss the first category i.e. innate weaknesses.

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1. INNATE WEAKNESSES

Fear
Many people think of security
Instead of opportunity.
They seem to be more afraid of life,
Rather than death.
Let us not look back in anger
Or forward in fear
...But look around in awareness.

Fear is an unpleasant emotion that erupts when we are worried about something dangerous, painful or bad. It engulfs us when we think we are caught in an event that is current or that could happen in the future. It is of two types, physical and psychological. When we step on a snake, we shriek with fear and immediately an extraordinary volume of adrenaline is released into our blood stream to give us strength to run away from the scene. It is a temporary phase. But when it becomes a prolonged process spread over a period of time, it becomes psychological fear, otherwise called 'Tension'. You are tense in anticipation of the unknown or unwanted incident.

Let us presume that you are travelling by a train. Suddenly in the middle of the night you hear a big 'thud' sound. You are first afraid. It is fear. Then you imagine all sorts of unfortunate accidents that could befall you. That is tension.

Imagine a person attending an interview for the first time, or a student preparing for his final exam. Both are full of fear but for different reasons. One considers what if he doesn't make it through the interview. The other fears the failure in the exam. A boy is nervous to propose to his girl friend. He fears that she might even snub his friendship. This is called fear of rejection. Whether it is fright, tension, terror, anxiety, uneasiness or scare, they are all the stems of fear. And the following are the results of fear:

1. Excessive fear causes various physical problems.
2. Illogical fear leads to tension.
3. Groundless fear causes us to flee when we should stand.
4. Irrational fear brings confusion.
5. Silly fear keeps us in hide, when we are supposed to be in the open.
6. Restless fear keeps us away from success.

When fear is such a disconcerting situation, then why do people enjoy reading horror books and watching terror movies? The answer is that the fear isn't really a negative emotion. Watching horror movies is a kind of working through some of our deepest fears, without actually having to experience them ourselves. It allows us to confront these fears and play with them, being able to go to the edge of our seat and return safely. Same logic stands good for watching tear-jerking movies.

Causes for fear: In my sixth class, when my teacher was explaining the water formula, that is $2H2 + O2 = 2H2O$. I stood up to ask, "Sir, why can't it be $H2 + O = H2O$?

He banged me on my head and said, "Stupid! Sit down. You will never understand the intricacies of chemistry". From then onwards, Chemistry became my nightmare. I never scored more than forty in that particular subject. Subsequently when I became an author, to write two novels, one based on biochemistry and the other on astronomy, I had to read Isaac Asimov and Arthur Clark. My windows to the unknown subject opened up. I realised that I missed a wonderful subject like Chemistry for past twenty-five years because of what my teacher did to me 25 years ago in that classroom.

It is very difficult to understand how, when and why these phobias originate. A teacher's opening remark to the students like "This subject is very complex and difficult to understand unless you concentrate very hard..." has its devastating effect on the students. Possibility thinking is the only weapon to combat the hidden fears. To open the unknown window one should logically analyse the basic cause for his phobias like disgust, boredom, depression etc and encounter them. Easy to say but difficult to practice, I know, but not impossible.

There is no simple single solution to 'exam fear'. You may create more anxiety if you become too concerned to relieve all the symptoms at one go. Do not expect an immediate 'complete relief' as the only solution. Keep in mind that the main reason for your fear is, "your incapacity to believe your own ability".

Imagine a fly in your father's car. You open the window to let it go. It turns around and frantically tries to exit through the other side and hits the closed glass. Even if you open all the windows, it turns towards the steering. It makes hell of a trouble without knowing the exact way-out to its problem.

We are sure better than insects. You are capable of achieving anything. Have faith in your capacities. If you doubt your beliefs, you believe your doubts. If you fail to practice, you practice failure.

Can we fight fear? Certainly yes if you know the Four Noble Truths sermonized by Buddha philosophy, first being the Reality (of the problem), second the Cause (for the problem), third the Effect (by the problem) and lastly the Solution (to the problem). It is as simple as that. In physician's terms, it would be like: Disease, the Cause of disease (Diagnosis) the Treatment (Prognosis) and the Recovery.

Can you think for a while and answer this question? What are you most afraid off? Answer it first and then answer the next question. Why are you afraid of it? You may not be able to answer it logically and the answer may not be to your satisfaction either.

You also know that 'Belief' is the cause of fear. Surprisingly, belief itself is the antidote for fear. Combat fear with faith.

When you reach the outer rim of light and are about to step into the darkness of the unknown, "faith" is... knowing one of the two things that could happen...! One is...

that you can hold on something solid to help you stand on. The second is... the experience of falling into the emptiness could help you learn 'how to fly'.

Suppose a student failed in his exams. What could be his next reaction? He may decide to concentrate more on his studies. Instead think of the following

alternatives:

1. Vow his God that he would walk all the way to his temple on the seven hills to get him through the exams the next time.

2. You go for Vastu Consultation or wear ring that changes your life.

3. He may weep for next 9 months, and with a sinking feeling he may stop working totally.

4. He could become a doubting Thomas and instead of concentrating on studies again, he rues the next six months about what went wrong with his studies.

5. You change one alphabet in your name to pass in the next exam.

6. Commits suicide.

Imagine a tiger entering your room where you are studying alone. What would be your immediate reaction? You may stand and shout for help, or instinctively may throw your book at the tiger, or hop on to the table and reach for the ceiling fan. You may even muster enough presence of mind and run out of the room and bolt it from the outside and lock the tiger inside.

Instead, think of the following possibilities.

1. You pray God that you would go over to the seven hills by walk.

2. Feel that 'vaastu' of your room is perfect and hence you need not fear.

3. You are shell-shocked and do not try to escape from the cabin and it is a forgone conclusion that you are going to die even before the tiger moves a step forward.

4. You are a doubting Thomas and doubt if tigers kill students working in their study rooms.

5. You feel that the tiger already had its lunch a short time ago and therefore, you are sure that it is not inclined to go after another prey, and you continue your own work and procrastinate your action further till it decides to have its next lunch (you).

6. You commit suicide before it kills you.

Sounds stupid? Funny? It may not, if you juxtapose the word 'failing your exam' with 'tiger' and 'life' with your 'study room'. Like a tiger, when a problem walks into your chamber of 'life', many a times you are tense and consider those funny options rather than go for the correct solution. To act in a different way, one should be courageous.

"Fear is a dark room where the negatives develop' said one Pakistani philosopher. Fear is the mixture of Doubt, Apprehension and Complex. Doubt is like virus and when we allow it to grow bigger than our faith, it kills our success. Apprehension is the compass that shows the areas where we have to grow. Your fear towards the 'problem' is like a mist. Walk through it and you find nothing.

The four pillars to fight fear are: Wakefulness, Hard Work, Innovation, and Persistence (WHIP). It is a convenient way to remember them, since success is associated with whipping the fear.

Write down your fears. Begin the list with the fear that causes you the most anxiety and embarrassment and go down in order of priority. Now start with the bottom. It is easy to combat the small qualms and gain confidence, to fight more harmful phobias.

Suppose 'fear of public speaking' is your prime phobia toping the list, and 'Good Samaritan's Syndrome' (G.S.S) is at the bottom, start with it. The symptoms of G.S.S are: being weak to be good to all; saying 'yes' where you are supposed to say no, signing the guarantee bonds reluctantly for others or accommodating something unwillingly etc.

Let us presume that you planned to complete you studies or finish the work by a certain time. Your friend drops in unannounced and begins to chitchat. Worrying that he may misunderstand you, you are unable to ask him to leave. Your inability to say 'no' leaves you working another one hour more and possibly spoils the rest your

other schedule.

Good Samaritan syndrome is the end product of inferiority complex and fear of rejection. You feel that you may loose your friends if you are rude. But let us visualise the situation from another angle. You went to your friend without an appointment. He politely and friendly but firmly tells you that he had fixed up a time schedule for his study. What do you think of him? Rude? No. You appreciate him. Being a good sport you accept it and thereafter make it a point to take his time before visiting him.

When you are able to appreciate his point of view, why do you think that he wouldn't be able to appreciate your point of view? Let us presume that he does not appreciate your point of view, you loose nothing, except an individual that doesn't appreciate you and your perspective. But if you are able to convince them, people around you soon recognise your work culture, values and ethics and you gain immensely.

Two firemen went to a forest to extinguish a small fire. After completing their job, they went to a stream. One of the firemen had his face smudged with black ash. Other man was clean. Who would wash his face first? We think that the man with dirty face would! No. The person, who sees the grubby face, would do it first. The person who sees a clean face in front of him thinks that he is also clean.

This is your personality, derived from the word Personae, which means 'mask'. Remove your mask. Stay original. Don't wear coloured glasses. See the world with your own untainted spectacles and come to a conclusion. Developing strong personality is the best mantra to fight Good Samaritan Syndrome and ultimately, the 'fear'.

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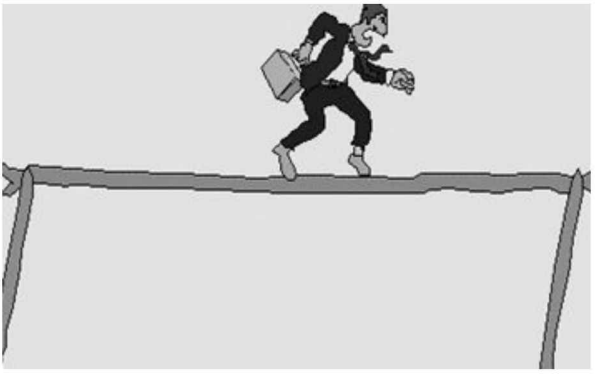
TENSION:



Fear, desire
Tension and
Anxiety
Are the instruments
Either to grow or
To destroy you

Try to understand the difference between fear, tension and anxiety. As said earlier, when you step on a large rattlesnake, you have good reason to be afraid. That's 'fear'. When you begin to doubt whether the object on which you have stepped on is a rope or a live rattlesnake and start sweating, then it is 'tension'. If you are continuously worried day and night that a rattlesnake may crawl into your room, that's 'anxiety'. Squeezing your palms, rubbing fingers, wiping your face frequently with a napkin are the preliminary indications of anxiety. Fear is healthy to certain extent, because it often keeps you alive.

Tension before exams: For many students, examinations give the shivers. They numb one's thinking. They drastically reduce ones ability to perform. As exams approach, there are five devastating phases of 'stresses'.

1. The pangs of exams hit you three months prior to the actual exams. It brings on a certain sense of unease, a sense of lonely feeling. You feel insecure and dwell on past mistakes. It begins with a certain self-criticism and you end up with a 'what if?' thinking.

2. One fine morning you wake up and you are suddenly reminded of your exams. Or someone says something that reminds you of the approaching exams.

3. A week prior to the exams, it gradually turns into anxiety. Suddenly from nowhere the worry erupts. You begin to experience an unpleasant agony without any cause. Anxiety causes troubled sleep, depression. You begin to fear the worst and indulge in unnecessary thinking. You begin to have neck aches. Some do develop skin rashes.

4. The day before the exam you are almost panicky. Panic includes sweaty palms, shivering fingers. Slowly you cease to grin and smile.

5. As you receive the question paper, your 'tension' peaks. Your memory fails you. You experience lapses in your thinking process and mental blocks.

6. The nervousness peaks during the exam. Rapid heartbeats, loosing self-confidence are the indicators at this stage. Uneasiness continues for sometime even after exam.

Life shrinks or expands in proportion to our courage. To certain extent fear is part of our life. Fear, tension and sorrow are the three virtues without which we could have never learnt to be brave and patient. If there were only joy in this world, there would not have been any wisdom.

Under the influence of tension, you are bound to perform with care in the preliminary stage, but later it pulls you down. When anxiety peaks, your ability to achieve what you have set forth for comes down to zero. This causes the 'fear of failure', the reason why many a student absents from appearing for an exam.

While going to the examination, some students experience increased heartbeats, sweating and trembling fingers. The reasons are:

a) Lack of confidence.

b) Some mothers while seeing their young children off to school experience the same psychosomatic disorders. Their children too imbibe it. It's a kind of self-hypnotic state of mind and continues to grow along with age.

c) They feel that it is the end of the road if they do not score good marks.

Your fear no way helps you. Be bold. Study well with all the seriousness that is at your command. Face the exams with cheer. Have you not seen a race horse just

before the race is to begin? It bubbles with energy and enthusiasm, raring to go and run the race. Race to win...! Feel the same way. Consider the exams as an opportunity to prove your worth.

You spend sleepless nights reading. You aim high. Suppose the results are disappointing. Never think of drastic actions like committing suicide. Try again. The ability to perform is in your control, but you are not in charge of many other factors. The computer that grades your marks could go wrong. A disturbed examiner may not assess your answers properly. You never think of all these probabilities and worry about them. This is the reason why you should not get depressed and think that it is the end of the road.

Let us take another example. You want to watch a movie. You reach the cinema theatre well in advance before the show starts. You wait in a queue. Yet you do not get a ticket. Now answer these questions. Did you spend a sleepless night the previous day? Did your palms sweat with tension while going to the cinema theatre? Did you want to commit suicide just because the booking counter was closed on your face? No....! Then, why do you have to undergo all these stages of tension before appearing for an exam? Examination is a method to help measure your intelligence. It shows you a way for a better future. If you do not perform well or to your own expectations, you can still attempt to better it again. You need not drown yourself in sorrow, just because you did not get the qualifying marks in the entrance for Medicine or Engineering.

Statistics prove that Engineers and Doctors constitute less than just 5% of the exceptionally rich and famous people in the world.

This is the kind of positive thinking that helps gets you out of your depression and pulls you out of your tension. My intention is not to undermine the value of examination. It is only to make you feel comfortable and suggest you not to worry too much about the end result.

Failure and depression: Nowadays the number of suicides among student population is increasing. People who cannot face a failure take the extreme steeps. The reasons for depression are:

a) I have to sit with my juniors;

b) I have to read the entire syllabus once again;

c) I shattered the confidence of my parents.

d) My classmates get promoted to the higher class;

e) I became a laughing stock among my friends and relatives;

Certainly you feel depressed about your failure and the sinking feeling continues to peak for the first one or two days. But life is more valuable than these petty issues. If you can pause / stop thinking of this extreme idea, you would be back to normal in due course of time. Can you show me a person who succeeded without failure? How many times does a kid fall before learning to walk? How many times were you injured while learning to pedal a cycle? Convert the failure into a creative crisis. Without a crisis, you cannot have an experience to learn.

An old ass fell into a ruined well in the back yard of a washer man. The owner was a miser. He thought it was a waste to spend on labour to bring it out from the well. If it dies there, he thought, he can save the expenditure of feeding the animal. He presumed that people would consider it a natural death.

But after dark, the ass started yelling.

The owner feared that the villagers hearing it yell, would curse him. He started filling the well with a large basket of mud to bury the ass. He was also happy, as he would have more space in his back yard by covering the well. By sunrise, as he was about to complete his job, he felt a powerful and devastating kick on his face. To his dismay it was the old ass that kicked him.

The donkey understood the ill wishes of its owner. It turned each basket of mud falling on it, into a step to climb, came out, took revenge and got free.

How to deal with tension: Students feel that something is wrong if they are 'not' tensed up before and during exams. It is a wrong belief. The more confident you are, less is your tension. When you are tense, you try to involve others, find people less reassuring, and fume out your frustration. The examination phobia gets you irritated fast, makes you start blaming others for silly reasons. You find yourself withdrawing with low self-esteem and everything is in shambles...! but how to deal with it? To handle tension, practice the following.

- Build up the foundation. Avoid the imagining issues. 50 percent of the problems are imaginary. 30 percent don't harm us. Remaining 20 percent real problems can be tackled if we stop thinking about the other eighty percent.
- Anxiety has its own healthy purpose. Not feeling anxious about situations like class tests etc, would lead to thoughtlessness. But unwarranted and excess anxiety is dangerous.
- Learn to handle anxiety more effectively with any relaxation method that suits you. This includes breathing exercises like yogasanas (particularly savasana) or a pleasant morning walk.
- Explore the critical nature of your thinking. Dispute your negative beliefs about yourself. Think like '...I have got this far; why should I fail now?'
- Take a look at old question papers and design your own questions. Create an artificial test atmosphere and write it with the help of other people and your tutors. Strengthen your revision skills. Rehearse as many a times as possible. Combat the 'Rehearse avoidance'.
- While taking the question paper from the examiner and preparing to start answering, smile! Yes. Keep on smiling. It is different from a laugh. Be pleasant. Your smile releases 'Dopamine' a neurotransmitter in your brain that activates your Serotonin, a feel good factor.

Here is an example to show how you answer a question differently under stress and while smiling. Do it immediately and only once. Try to pick up how many 'F's are there in this sentence: "Finished files are fine fruits of years of scientific deep study combined with the experience of years". You might have found out around four or five or may be six. But now search again with a smile on your face. You will get some more. The answer is in page number 8 of this book.

Anguish:

I wanted another soul to understand me
A shoulder to lay my head and cry
Then I thought... instead,
Why should not I try?
Two inches below my left shoulder
To find it from my 'heart'
The reason for my agony and to destroy

Pressures of modern life led to increase the stress and depression among children. Depression is different from Sorrow. Sorrow is a common human emotion. It is temporary and harmless. Depression is a state of sinking feeling. It includes a cluster of symptoms like dejection, despondence. This state of feeling 'low' persists for at least four to six weeks and often lasts longer.

Your life is an island separated from all other islands and continents. Regardless of how many boats you send to other shores or how many ships arrive upon your shores, you yourself are an island separated by its own pains, secluded in its happiness.

Symptoms of Depression: A student need not worry about temporary emotional gloominess, which is the effect of tension that is caused by the approaching exams. But a student needs to be cautious and prepare to fight the 'permanent' symptoms, which hamper studies and concentration. Check with this list of possible symptoms of depression:

- I take more than 60 minutes to fall asleep and I wake up more than once during the night. I wake up at least one hour before I need to...

and cannot go back to sleep again.

- I lost interest in all the activities, which I was enjoying earlier. I am not energetic and am tiring easily for no apparent reason.
- I am unable to respond to most questions and I'm sure my thinking has slowed down.
- I find a change in my appetite with either significant weight loss or gain.
- For no fault of mine I feel guilty and blame myself for all such things.

Vague physical complaints like continuous headaches, stomach aches etc are also few symptoms that children and adolescents express or experience under depression.

Causes of depression:

- Failure in an examination, disappointment in love or loosing a rank may cause grave agony to students.
- For small reasons like a lecturer passing a bad remark or on knowing that a bad rumour is being spread about them, emotionally sensitive students get depressed. Even indifference of a close friend makes them downhearted.
- The new environment can also be another reason for anguish.
- Sometimes the unfamiliar or disgusting work situation may lead to anguish. An employee who does not have job satisfaction and a student under stress are more prone to get depressed very easily.

New Environment: Many hidden factors may add up to the state of affairs. Ragging and Homesickness play on your nerves at the same time. Students 'presumably' from higher 'sect' pose as if they have landed from a different world and are very special. You know that they are speaking English, but you can make nothing out of it. Nobody appreciates your contributions. There is no one to help you. You begin to race with time to complete your assignments. But it is simply too much of work.... stress... inadequate money... Insecurity...!

At this juncture, you try to choose and make friends. Some times you are right. At times your choice goes wrong. You may suddenly find that your new friend is a negative thinker. Or you find that your friend is taking undue control over yourself. You may find yourself being gossiped about. You find that you were so happy till

yesterday and suddenly everything become so melancholic and distressed.

A boy from a small rural place might have been a school-first, adored by the teachers, liked by the family members and dearly loved by the entire village. But once he joins his Engineering, Medical or Management course, he has to compete with many school-firsts from other schools. It appears as though everybody is fighting to get that one and only first rank. No patting, no admiration and above all... homesickness and ragging, leads him to mental agony and torture.

But look at it from the other angle. One has to invariably and inevitably pass through many totally new and alien cultures and environments during one's lifetime. After summer vacations, its time to step into a new classroom, new college and for those who completed their education, it is a new job. A child, after spending three years in his mother's safe hands, leaves it, for its kindergarten school. A girl, after marriage, has to learn to live with totally strange people. A Non-English medium school student faces entirely new culture when he joins a college. Unless you invite a change, how can you expect a miracle?

When people face problems in new surroundings, they start blaming others for their performance. "It's in our family genes...we are not intelligent ... my parents brought me up like this and I cannot help ... my previous education was not from a good institution ... I am too sensitive to handle people correctly" are some of the excuses they make. We find people even blaming either the society or their country for their misfortunes.

Some people take the other route. '...They are ragging me and I rag others in tears. When I turn a senior, I would like to inflict the same pain and take sadistic revenge on some other innocent guy...!' Never do it. It is not the way to come out of your frustration. Three people can help you in this regard and among the three, the third one is the best.

Teachers: Depressed students are not attentive. It is the responsibility of the teacher to engage the depressed student in class discussions and stimulate their minds. This makes such students to pay attention. This in turn stops the student from ignoring the teacher. Let them know that you care, but without getting too personal. Help them complete assignments or set up extra study time. To begin with, expect their denial of your help. It is not an easy task. Never give up on any student. Continue to insist on helping. Students can tell when a teacher no longer believes in them and it

only worsens the situation.

Parents: 'Family' is the best doctor to treat a depressed student under stress. Frequent conversations amongst family members are most important. For instance, if a bright boy is making poor grades at a highly competitive school, his parents might consider transferring him to a school that provides a more nurturing environment. Parents should practice 'active listening', express interest in what their child thinks and validate his feelings.

Yourself the doctor: You can billow out of your depression by first analysing the cause. There's no way you can understand your own mental problems without becoming your own psychologist.

An idle man's brain is a devil's workshop. When you are in depression, mingle with people. Talk to your elders or sane friends. Change the place. Go for a short outing. Move away from the routine. When none of this works out, consult a motivator. Never discuss these feelings with fake and false psychologists or your friends, who believe that they are more knowledgeable.

The only way to overcome your constraints is your attitude. You cannot change the people around you, neither the conditions nor the atmosphere and situations around you. Then what is that you can do about it? You change.

Challenge your paradigms, change the way you think and look the world through different glasses. Change makes life difficult for a while and causes initial stress. But in the long run it makes you comfortable. It is an ongoing process in life.

Self-change: A fool may be known by six things: anger, without cause; speech, without profit; change, without progress; inquiry, without object; putting trust in a stranger, and mistaking foes for friends. Do you think that changing the life style according to the situation is a born gift? No. It is your choice. We are not butterflies to change physically. But certainly we can change the way we think. 'Peace is nowhere... peace is now here' are the same letters but only the punctuation (spacing) is different. Adjust the spaces and you find the difference. Change your three characteristics.

1. Your attitude

2. Your behaviour.

3. Your thinking.

For every individual the attitudinal change takes place from the 'inside out'. Whether it's going to be a wonderful day or ugly day, it all depends on how you think the day is going to be, while waking up from your bed,

Henry ford correctly said, "If you think you can, and you think you can't... both are correct". Accept responsibility. You are responsible for what you are, what you have and what you do. Your logical thinking defuses the situation. You refuse to let a situation hook you. Never allow a friend or any other person to take you granted. And above all, don't spread rumours.

When a student told Rabindranath Tagore that people in Shanthinikethan were talking bad about the behaviour of another student and wanted to tell the details, the Guru asked him, "Before telling me the details, answer my three questions, First and foremost, do you enquire the real facts or just want to convey the hearsay? Secondly, is the behaviour of the student harmful to anyone else? And finally... is it necessary to tell me about it?"

Ask yourself these three questions before opening your mouth about others.

Your cynical thoughts lead you to your misery. Your thoughts translate into your deeds and those actions lead you to your destiny. With a defeatist attitude, uncontrolled behaviour and cynical thinking, you can never have a positive day. With an affirmative attitude, restrained behaviour and constructive thinking, you can never have a bad day. The choice is yours.

Smile and Touch: Can love be understood or does it need an expression? Certainly it requires a mode of communication. To love is easy. To express love in proper form is difficult. When it is questioned in our personality development seminars, 'how do you express your love to your parents?' some students say, 'By studying hard' or 'By fulfilling their dreams'. No. It is not love. It is a task for your own benefit.

You can express your love through a smile, touch or a deed. Writing a letter is the best way to express your love. You would be able to articulate your expressions better on paper rather than say it out. Psychologists encourage kids and teenagers and their parents to express themselves through letters, even though all of them live under the same roof.

In the initial stages of acquaintance, love is conveyed too often by various ways and means. When both the persons reach a stage where one takes the other's love for granted, unfortunately the communication diminishes. It happens with the spouses after certain years of marriage and with the children when they enter 'I am O.K. - You are not O.K.' stage. At this stage, some children become either egoistic or embarrassed to express their love for their parents. Some enter into their shell and some don't recognise their elders.

Mark Twain wrote "When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years".

Express love: "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways", in this famous line, Browning poetised one of the most engaging tasks for researchers on love. Remember how your mother held you when you were a baby, how your father built sand castles on the beach, or read you a storybook in the night by your side. Just because you are older now, doesn't mean that you need not reciprocate their love nor do they need to be 'told' that you love them!

May be you are a teenager or a graduate. Still you can go to the kitchen. Help your mother by peeling onions. It is not that she cannot do it on her own, but those little things that you exchange while lending a hand strengthens the bond of affection. When your father lies down with backache, sitting by his side, you apply the balm instead of your mother. Try decorating your mother's palms with 'mehandi' or colour your father's hair. Take pride in cooking for the whole family all on your own and make it a memorable evening for all.

An engineering student, when asked about a most memorable moment that she would cherish had this to say: 'when my mother was ill, my elder brother combed my hair, plaited it. He powdered my face and sent me to school. That happened around ten years ago. And it is a wonderful experience to me'. Nobody laughed. The entire class vibrated with genuine claps.

Love is selflessness. For some people it starts with family members and stays there, for some others, it develops into universal love.

On 20th July 1969, when man stepped on the Moon for the first time, somebody asked Theresa, whether she would like to visit the moon if given a chance? "Certainly yes" replied the Mother, "...if the diseased, destitute, helpless and unwanted are there".

It's not what we eat but what we digest that makes us strong; not what we gain but what save that makes us rich; not what we read but we remember that makes us learned; and not what we profess but what we practice that gives us integrity.

Don't fear failure so much that you refuse to try new things. The saddest summary of a life contains three descriptions: could have, might have, and should have.

IN BRIEF....

- **In-born weaknesses are mainly fear and anguish. You should follow the four noble truths to combat your fears: Reality of fear, its Origin, Effect and finally the Solution. Many of us try to search for the solution first, rather than cause.**
- **Stepping on a 'snake is 'fear'. Continuous fear of stepping on a snake is 'tension'.**
- **Depression is another 'acquired weakness'. Homesickness, new environment, ragging, financial problems, health, failure in love etc may cause you depression. Many reasons at the back of your fear, tension and depression are imaginary. By changing your attitude, behaviour and thinking process you can fight out your fear, stress and depression.**
- **Take the help of your parents or your guide to come out of your in-born problems. Yoga and breathing exercises may also help to locate the origin of your problem and alienate from it.**

ACQUIRED WEAKNESSES

ANGER

Anger is
Always with a reason
But
Never with a good reason
Never... never
With a valid reason

There are certain weaknesses that we acquire along with our age. Dr. Robert Elias Najemy advocates a remedy called 'Attitude Therapy' and says that we create our health, illness, (un) happiness, unity, alienation, joys and problems through our ways of thinking, behaving, eating, sleeping, living and interacting. When we eat poorly or disorderly, do not exercise, sleep too little or too much, and waste our mental and emotional energy on so many superficial pursuits, we will naturally lose our physical and mental health. 'When anxiety and tension become a chronic situation, then the body and mind would gradually wear down into a state of weakness and ill health' says the doctor. According to him "I alone am responsible for my life, health and happiness" attitude is the formula for success. With this understanding, let us discuss various weaknesses, first being anger.

Anger has immense negative effect on students. The blood clots, the adrenaline release and the raise in the levels of stress hormones due to anger damage the equilibrium of mind. That is the reason why some people loose their balance of mind

under the influence of anger and smash the costly glass panels and throw the articles.

Basis for anger: Anger is not 'action'. It is your reaction to somebody's action. Anger develops through frustration, dissatisfaction and jealousy. You can knock down your anger with a change in your outlook. Some students have the dissatisfaction that other people seem so much more successful or popular than them. You must note that in all areas of life, you can find people both either luckier or less fortunate than you. Instead of comparing you with your friends, compare your 'today' with 'yesterday' and think whether you are wiser, luckier and happier now!

The impact of 'feeling low' complex is more in teenagers, where self-consciousness plays a vital part. Comparison is created by parental pressure to perform and to outdo other students. Parents may also want you to learn everything: from music to painting, or be outstanding in a particular sport. When you can't rise up to the expectation, or during the process of meeting it, you may suffer physical stress, aggression, complex and depression. Then you develop negative traits such as shyness, unfriendliness and jealousy, and may retreat into your own world to become a loner, and thus prone to more stress, leading to anger.

We all carry an invisible suitcase stuffing it with our sorrows, anguish and frustration and carry it always with us. When it blows up, we find a scapegoat (normally mother, friend or younger sister/brother in your case) and ventilate our displeasure as 'anger'. This is the reason why people with fewer complaints about themselves are not prone to anger.

How to fight anger? : Students, who take shelter for their frustrations under anger, cannot concentrate on their studies. The process to control anger is called 'Tuning'. Do you know that you can tune your brain? Yes, you can.

When the husband dies, the wife cries flogging her chest, but if his wife dies, the husband simply sobs. Affection being the same, why there is a difference in their expression? With our custom, behaviour and tradition we are accustomed to react in a fashion that we are 'taught'. Men do not weep. Women express their sorrow through tears. It is called 'tuning'. You can tune your reaction to a certain incident if you are willing to.

Suppose you were walking on a roadside and suddenly somebody kicked you on your

back from behind. Shocked first, confused next, you turned around. A fellow was smiling at you. Annoyed, but being civilized, you asked him, "What happened? Are you crazy? "

He smiled "When donkeys are to be tamed, they are to be kicked on their back. I kicked you because you look like a donkey".

Tightening your fist, you exasperated, "Do I look like a donkey?" He came nearer to you, looked into your face thoroughly and apologised, "Sorry. You don't look like a donkey" and waited for a second to confirm, "You look like a monkey."

Then you slapped him. You hit him with such a force that your finger ring directly struck his eye and it started oozing blood. He almost lost his eye. Then appeared two plain cloth men running out from a building to catch him and to tell you that he had just escaped from their hospital. Then you saw the board to realise that it was a mental hospital and he was mentally ill. You were shell-shocked. His shirt was soaking with blood. They were taking him back. Going along with them, unmindful of his wound, he was waving his hand wishing you best of luck, with an innocent insane smile.

What happened to your anger now? Which emotion replaced it? How much time it has taken for your Ire, Wrath, Annoyance and Anger to change into Guilt, Compassion and Sympathy? Hardly one second. If you could have waited for one more second, the entire scenario would have changed.

In this contest, Stephen R. Covey, writer of the famous book 'Seven habits of Highly Effective People', introduces a concept by name 'Pause Button Technique'. He says: Before your emotional outburst, press the pause button of your (mental) tape recorder and hold it for a second to consider six important factors.

1. Introspection: Why should he kick me unless he is mad? Without considering this simple fact for a second, why should I again kick him back unless I am also mad?

Every action has a reaction. We cannot control other's action, but certainly can control our reaction. Ninety percent of our sorrows are not due to other's actions but for our reaction to it. Till ten years back. I could never control my annoyance and displeasure. I used to break coffee cups and phones. After reading Covey's book I started introspecting before my reaction to an unwanted or irritating incident. The

results are very encouraging.

2. Consciousness: Temporary reactions are guided by our emotions and permanent reactions by our consciousness. Does the judge in my inner conscious accept my action? Or will I repent later?

Many of us repent for our reactions at a later stage. Our consciousness should accept our reactions 'permanently' but not temporally. While reacting to a situation, be confident that you will not repent for it afterwards.

3. Creativity: He hit me. I hit him back. Could I have reacted in a better way than this?

Before your reaction to other's action, try to create something new, different and better. When an apple from a tree falls on your head, instead of eating it, if you think why it has not gone in the reverse towards the sky, you would become Sir Isaac Newton. Thinking differently and acting with creativity is a part of tuning our brain. This helps us to build up balance of mind.

4 Freedom of thought: Am I doing this under any influence of a superstition, alcoholism or frustration, loosing my logical thinking?

Your elders and society guide you to a great extent. But verify whether illogical faiths and irrational superstitions manoeuvre you. Make sure that your reactions are not controlled by your ridiculous beliefs. For example, while going for the exam, if you see a black cat, do you step back? Why? What is the logic in it? 'Freedom of thought' gives you rational thinking. People become superstitious when they do not have belief in themselves.

5. Johari's windows: We will discuss about these windows at a later stage in detail. One of the windows is called 'Unknown window'. The exact cause for anger may lie somewhere. It is the frustration. Yes. The main reason for anger is frustration. Frustration due to bad human relations, financial insecurity, things not happening in your way, your fears, unachieved goals... are the main permanent reasons for your anger.

6. Human relations: When you are not comfortable with yourself, it is called frustration. When you are not comfortable with some people, the chances of your becoming angry on them are more. When you don't like a person, you irritate soon.

Temporary incidents causing frustrations (when things do not go as you want them to be) may also cause anger.Try to analyse the above six sutras to fight out the 'anger' in you. It looks impracticable initially, but I am telling with my experience, with a small practice, it is possible.

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Inferiority complex

You have a belief about yourself
That something is wrong
With a part of you
Or about a quality of you
Which is not the truth
The truth is that
You have an inferiority complex.

You might have seen in advertisements, a dark girl suffering from inferiority complex desperately wanting to become a cricket commentator. Her friend gives her a cream. She uses it for few days and turns out fair and rosy.

We don't know how far a cream can change your original complexion, but certainly there are no creams to extinguish (?) whiten those shades of in the innermost recess of your mind. It is you who has to wipe them off. Sceptics feel unhappy because roses have thorns beneath them. Optimists feel happy as roses are 'above' the thorns. The underlying philosophy of this simple quotation shows us how we should look at life.

A young boy spends sleepless nights worrying about his white hair. A young girl spends hours before a mirror agonising about the first pimple on her cheek.

At one stage or other every young person goes through this turmoil. I am short...I am black...I am poor...I am not beautiful... I am plump and stout... I am worried about the hair fall while combing... I don't look good with my spectacles... I can never become an airhostess with my pimples...

During my graduate days I had a sinking feeling because of my feminine voice. Added to it I was short. I became an introvert with inferiority complex and very low self-esteem. My performance in the class touched its lowest level. My only aim was to become a six-footer with a masculine voice. I used to identify success with height. I was envying tall people for their height and smartness.

At this juncture, a children's magazine published my first story. Someone congratulated me. I realised that if I write well, in spite of being short, people would recognise me. In this process, I converted my inferiority complex and 'thirst for recognition' into penmanship and became a Chartered Accountant, playwright, novelist, a movie director and finally a motivator. If I were to be two inches taller, I might not have been here presenting this book before you.

Nature might not have blessed you with something you wanted, but certainly might have blessed with something else. We feel sorry for what we do not have rather than developing what we have! And that is 'positive thinking'.

Here is my first story:

There lived a wrestler. He was very proud as he was continuously winning. A crippled young boy wanted to fight with him. Everybody ridiculed him as he has no right hand, but one Guru taught him how to fight the wrestler and sent him to the competition. He defeated the wrestler and won the prize. Surprised over his achievement, he bowed to the guru and asked how could he do this miracle? Guru smiled and told him, "Dear son! I taught you a tip in wrestling called 'gajabandha'. Under this curling, if your opponent intends to win over you, he has to catch your right hand and ground you. Your opponent was frantically searching for your right hand throughout the game and thus you have won."

Coming out of complexes: There are five excellent tips to overcome frustration and inferiority complex.

1. The most significant point is... don't think that people always be thinking of

you. They have enough work of their own. Normally a person spends 10% of his time thinking about hundreds of other things. You are just one among those hundred.

2. Love thyself. Try to spend more time with you. In fact, every person has to date with himself for some time every day. Cultivate a hobby. Instead of brooding over complex issues, read books, watch productive TV programs, listen to music or engage in gardening or prayer. A good hobby gives you confidence.

3. Live as you wish to live, of course, without hurting others. It is up to the people to decide whether to love you or leave you. People who do not like your life-style leave you. You need not pretend. Live with your own traits. Once you wear a different mask for people's sake, time and again you have to adjust it to cover up your inferiority complex.

4. Don't gossip. Don't spread rumours. Only people with inferiority complex have the nasty habit of gossiping and spreading scandals.

5. Finally, don't indulge in discussions where your physical or mental disability is belittled or heckled. Don't joke on yourself to cover up your disabilities. Avoid people who ridicule you and make you the butt of their jokes. Do not become a scapegoat and help them derive sadistic satisfaction.

To develop a strong personality, one has to be true to one-self. Some people conceal their inferiority complex, insecure feeling and lack of self-confidence by labelling themselves as sentimentalists. True sensitiveness is not weeping while watching a tragic movie, but donating a blanket to a beggar shivering by the roadside in a winter night.

Self Esteem: Developing self-esteem is the best medicine to combat inferiority complex. Then what is this self-esteem? To understand it better, let us analyse your preferences and likings.

You are an ardent fan of a popular and favourite film hero...! He fights for justice as a cop, stands first in his class as a student, reunites his parents... and above all, any girl whom he loves wouldn't say 'no' to him. It is your image of 'an Ideal He-man' on the screen. You never try to know his personal limitations. Same way, you love your friend and want to spend more time with him, ignoring his black spots, as you cannot change them. On the other side, you adore your parents in spite of some of

their weaknesses.

Your film hero, your friends or your parents are just part of your life, whereas you totally belong to you. Then how do you overcome your own drawbacks (that you hate in others)? How can you admire yourself better? How do you become a fan of yourself and love yourself hundred percent? What are your values and morals that you can stick on to, in any situation?

Respect, empathy, confidence, honesty and cooperation... to name a few... are traits that you can own, to feel good about you. Once you acquire them, you start liking yourself a lot, both inside out. This is called 'Self-esteem'. It gives you the courage to be your own self. It helps you in feeling 'good' about you from 'inside', so that approval and love do not have to come from the outside.

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A date with YOU:

Love is fire
May warm your heart
Or burn your house
Heaven or hell
...You can never tell.
But more you love 'you'
Or the 'nature',
Sure there is no danger

More is the pleasure.

'I love you more than anything in this world' says the boy. 'I too' utters the girl. As the shades in the park thicken, the girl wants to go home. Boy pleads Abhi dil bhara nahi, and wants her to stay for some more time. The girl sneezes and the boy says that he has not seen such a beautiful sneeze in his lifetime. She appreciates his patting. Boy suggests a plastic surgery to her nose so that she can outclass any heroine in Bollywood. The girl advises him to concentrate more on his studies.

Their sweet nothings include an argument, disagreement, flattery and suggestions. At this juncture imagine Lord Yama appearing before them to pronounce that he has to take one among them with him, but the choice is theirs. You know their answer. Unless they are in mad love, they say in unison 'Take the other'.

What does it mean? You never love anyone more than you love yourself. If it is true, how much time do you think you are spending with yourself? How are you courting yourself? 'Courting' means sparing some part of your day, to 'date' with you. Unless you love yourself, nobody loves you. Love needs expression. Express your love to you by spending time alone, without reading a book or watching TV. Think about your present way of living and ways for betterment. Life is 'working today happily for a better tomorrow'. Enjoy the clouds, rain, peacock, sunrise, forest, mountains, full moon, and above all 'you'.

As you pat your beloved, do you do the same thing to you? Instead of patting your own virtues, why do you suffer with self-imposed complexes?

You give suggestions to your beloved for betterment. What cosmetic surgeries are you planning to undergo to look good and impress the world with your character and virtues?

Positive selfishness: Do you have a brand of your own? Try to develop your B.R.A.N.D image. Your personal traits, gestures, smile, pleasantness, communications skills, values and virtues constitute your base (B). Your value base increases by your Reputation (R). A person without reputation either at house or at work place can never claim to be a brand ambassador for him-self. Reputation increases through your Achievements (A). Stay with achievers. Lethargic people prefer to stay in the company of lazy. Drunkards make friends with drunkards. Success enhances your Net worth (N). Every day either your wisdom or pleasure should increase. This is

called T–Y (Today-Yesterday) principle. Pleasure and wisdom are Dividends (D) that only mankind can enjoy. Animals have no T–Y increase on any day.

Positive selfishness means, without harming others, choosing to spend your time and energy on carrying out things that bring you joy. It includes making decisions that are based on what you want, rather than what others want you to be. 'The man who trims himself to suit everybody will soon loose his shape' is the famous quotation. Believe that by assessing your self-interests, you will ultimately serve the interests of others better. It is otherwise called the 'wellness wheel'. Compare life to the wheel of a bicycle. Visualise the spokes radiating out from the centre to the rim. Mental and physical exercises, self-control, living cheerfully and high spiritual values are some of the spokes of our daily activities that strengthen our wellness wheel.

Negative self-esteem: You might have noticed certain people engaging in fisticuffs to have a glimpse of their favourite hero. They are people with low self-esteem. Take inspiration from the artist, watching his efforts to reach to the peak, rather than mobbing him and facing the whip of the police. Lack of self-pride leads to negative self-esteem.

Sometimes you dislike some part of your behaviour. For example, you want to wake up early in the morning to study. You try and fail many a times. You start hating your laziness and procrastination. Constantly cursing your weakness and not trying to overcome them is called 'low self-esteem'.

You might have come across frustrated people, who persistently curse their fate. They are guided either by their vagabond friends or their own weaknesses. They hate their style of living but never try to change. They are pessimistic about themselves and always accentuate their troubles and struggles. They constantly need a shoulder to lay their head.

a) Approval, affection and encouragement are the foundation-blocks for self-esteem. It begins in childhood. When the parent appreciates a new skill, the child feels competent and successful. When the parents are negative, discouraging or abusive, the child believes that he is 'defective'. There are four basic steps to develop self-respect.

b) Accept yourself and be honest with you. Your honesty gives you confidence.

c) Trust your own positive feelings, and continue to improve upon them for betterment.

d) Never compare yourself with the virtues of others. Work only on increasing your opportunities.

e) Instead of being jealous of those people with greater success, be inspired by their acts and do your best to better your own performance.

f) Your self-esteem does not guarantee you success but certainly helps you to accept the situation when you don't succeed.

Leadership quality: There is a person who immensely influences you. He listens and explains. He is a person with whom you spend more time and has the ability to interfere with your growth than anyone else. This person is none other than "You".

Are you a person in charge of you? To test, ask yourself a question. Are you 'always' compelled to watch reluctantly a movie or go to a hotel of your friends' choice, and never allowed to open your voice? If the answer is in the affirmative, then you have a feeble person in you. But you need not feel sorry for your 'inability-to-say no' syndrome. The best way to fight your inferiority complex is to have a leader in you.

If we define leadership as 'influencing others to some purpose' and follower-ship as 'being influenced by others to accept', then they emerge as two sides of the same coin. Being a follower to a good preacher is nothing wrong but 'individuality' is something different. In ancient times, many of the princes might have inherited leadership qualities from their fathers as an in-born characteristic. Nowadays the times have changed. Believe in the vital reality that good leaders are made, not born. Leadership quality helps you to speak to people with authority and manage your things with dignity. The following are the essential qualities of a leader.

1. Basically people are managers of events whereas leaders are innovative.

2. Managers ask how and when, and leaders ask what and why? Let not someone guide you constantly. You may take suggestions, but keep the decisions with you.

3. Managers do things right and maintain. Leaders do right things and develop.

4. Advocates of the "big man school of visionary leadership" would have us believe that charisma and personality alone can work miracles but it is not true. One need not have a giant personality to become a leader. Lal Bahadur Shastriji and Potti Seeramulu are the best illustrations.

A person, who stands solid on his word, need not ever bend to touch other's feet. Leadership and team building go hand in hand. Good communication is the basic quality for team building. Here is an interesting story about communication.

Some university students were to write a class test on the topic, 'Team building'. They could not attend the test as they were to a late night party and did not wake up early. They requested their professor to conduct the examination next day. They unanimously said that the college bus tyre was punctured and hence they could not make it in time. Accepting their valid reason, the professor conducted the test next day. All the students, without discussing with each other, are supposed to answer...! There was only one question carrying hundred marks: "Which side of the bus tyre punctured, left or right? And is it rear or front?"

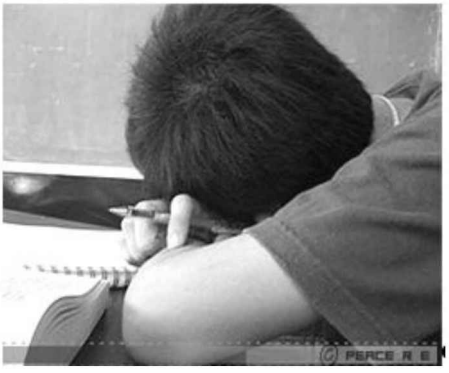
Finally, to get rid of your acquired devils like anger and inferiority complex, start-taking pleasure from everyday things that can bring you joy. Pay attention to the small pleasures; appreciate the wonders hidden in the tiny moments of life. Your life is to enjoy. Find the happiness in games, delight in love, and bliss in acquiring wisdom and above all the thrill in your ability to 'perform'. Be competitive, but fundamentally there is no greatness in being superior to some other person. The true greatness is in being superior to your previous-self.

Knowing others is factual intelligence. Knowing yourself is true wisdom. Mastering others is strength. Mastering yourself is power. If you realise that you have enough, you are truly rich. Hence the proverb: Success is the ability to go from one failure to another with no loss of enthusiasm.

IN BRIEF:

- **Some weaknesses we acquire with age, first being anger and the other being inferiority complex.**
- **Anger is due to frustration, dissatisfaction about life, bad human relations.**
- **To fight anger, the best way is to develop pause button technique.**
- **Developing self-esteem is the weapon to combat inferiority complex.**
- **Dating with you everyday for some time, appraising yourself, and developing leadership qualities help you to overcome your acquired weaknesses.**

ATTRACTIVE DEVILS



Laziness
"I don't feel like working.
Give me a medicine."

"You have no complications. You are just lazy," Hesitated a while, he asked the doctor, "But what is the medical term for it... So that I can tell my wife."

Seems to be a joke but the word 'laziness' does not appear either psychiatry or medical dictionaries. It can be defined as a 'disgusting comfort'. It has a temporary soothing effect, for which we repent afterwards. We feel guilty and have a sinking feeling of resigning to vacuum, but can't help. Some times, in our bitterness, we convince ourselves with our rigid stand of 'couldn't care less'.

Tiresome vs. Boredom: There are two different kinds of laziness, Physical and Mental. Physical laziness is the tiredness of body and one begins to seek constant physical comfort. We just try to stay comfortable and cosy. It is also called 'fatigue'. On the other hand, the mental laziness is 'loss of heart, a kind of deep discouragement, a feeling of hopelessness' creeping up onto us. It is called 'boredom'.

Don't confuse fatigue with boredom. Sure we all get tired, but not always because our body and mind wants to take rest, but because we are bored with the subject. You may push away a textbook thinking, "I'm exhausted! I can't read another word," and then casually pick up a magazine or newspaper. Obviously, you have confused fatigue with boredom.

Book anxiety: Ask yourself, "Do books scare me?" and if the answer is 'yes', you may be suffering from 'book-anxiety'. If you have to do something unpleasant, probably you postpone it as long as possible and would welcome innumerable reasons. There are certain tips to overcome this habit.

Stand silently near your study table for two minutes before you start. Try to associate the book with relaxation, not with tension and anxiety.

Study at the same time every day. Having regular hours for reading, at least five days a week will make it easier for you to follow the schedule consistently and to maintain an active approach to study.

Don't sit at your desk staring into a book and mumbling about your poor will power. If you do, your book soon becomes associated either with daydreaming or guilt. If you must daydream and as we all do it occasionally, get up turn around and face away from your books. Don't leave the room. The physical act of standing up helps you to be back on the job. Try it! You'll find that saying to yourself, "I should stand up now," will be enough for you to get you back on the right track.

When you are bored, change from reading to writing or to a computer. This is how I normally work.

Stay with people who are achievers. Lazy people make friends with lazier people. Watch successful people engrossed in a similar job like the one you are in. They work without a tired or bored look. Try to find out from where they are getting their inspiration to fight their exhaustion. They derive it from the sweet smell of success. Tasting success is the best weapon to fight Book-anxiety.

A first grade student tries to keep his rank because he enjoys the silent admiration and 'being proud' feeling of his parents. The compliments from his teachers, friends and relatives inspire him to perform well. He takes immense pleasure when parents show him to their children as a 'role model' worth emulating. He enjoys his envious position amongst his classmates. Thus the taste of success infuses incessant inflow of mental vigour, spirit and energy.

Is laziness a problem or weakness? Lecturing on the topic of 'Difference between a problem and weakness' in my personality development classes, I ask the students to raise their hands, if they consider themselves lazy. Surprisingly eighty percent of

them raise their hands. They 'know' that they are lazy but still they don't want to come out of it. Why? When I ask them whether at any given time, due to laziness any of them feel like going to the school without wearing a shirt, they smile. A student knows that the early hours (Brhmasamayam) are the best to study, but still prefers to sleep for some more time rather than studying. The same kid wakes up at 4 a.m. to watch India – Australia cricket match held in Australia. Thus laziness can be defined as 'willingness to do an interesting job at the cost of an important job'. Your preferences differ and it is called laziness. Hence there is no problem called 'Laziness'. it is a weakness.

Health and fatigue: The mental health of a student depends mostly on his physical fitness. Plan your daily activities in such a way as to help you leave you some time to take care of your body and personal hygiene. It is unfortunate that people care more for the outward appearance but not personal hygiene. Neither parents nor teachers explain the importance of physical exercise to the children, in their elementary standards. Later they completely forget the importance of physical exercise. In the intermediate stage, the competition for professional course makes them 'study missions', leaving no time for exercise.

Food habits and laziness: We have already discussed that laziness is of two types, fatigue and boredom. Food and drinks have a direct bearing on both your alertness and laziness. Do you know that Americans on average eat 18 'acres' of pizza every day? Pizzas, fast foods, oily foods and chocolates are the main reason for your drowsiness. By regulating your food habits, you can wage a war against your laziness. The following are a few tips to help fight laziness.

1. Drink as much water as you can while studying. It constantly keeps you fresh.

2. There are 22 amino acids of which body cannot produce 8. You need to get it from food that you consume. Soya bean cultivation is introduced recently into India and it is a highly recommended food for students. It is available in powder form too. Add it to your chapattis. You can mix Soya powder in water, fruit juices or buttermilk and drink it twice a day.

3. Proteins in beans, nuts, eggs and milk products help in stimulating your alertness. If you are a non-vegetarian eat fish instead of mutton. If you are not fatty and obsessed, cultivate the habit of eating a banana and / or drinking a glass of milk before you go to sleep. Never take them before or while reading, particularly in the

night.

4. Soon after eating a heavy meal you feel sleepy, as the intestines drain more blood and oxygen from the brain. This diversion makes you feel 'dizzy'. Reduce the volume of your lunch and dinner to 25% and have large breakfast and evening snacks. 'Eat your breakfast like a king, lunch as prince and dinner as a beggar' is the saying. Breakfast, Lunch, Evening snacks and Dinner in the ratio of 30:25:20:25 keeps your alertness constant throughout the day.

5. During breakfast and lunch, try to eat more complex carbohydrates found in foods such as grains, bread and pulses.

6. Normally you require 2500 calories per day. It is unpleasant to know that a hundred grams chips packet, butter cookies and a chocolate bar gives you 450, 480 and 300 calories respectively. Small coke contains 150 calories. Idly is good with 50 calories but a tea spoon of coconut or groundnut chutney adds up another 50 calories.

7. When you consume sweets like chocolates and coke, simple carbohydrates and sugar is being released immediately into the bloodstream. Our body mechanism counters it by releasing insulin. With this effect, the brain is flooded with essential glucose first and immediately starved of it the next. Burning of sugar and conversion into glucose requires heavy amounts of oxygen and it leads to dizziness, anxiety, headache, thirst and sleepiness. That is the reason why you should never eat sweets before or while studying. It is also better if you can reduce eating sugar products a month before exams.

8. Chilly, peppers and spices produce a feeling of pleasurable sensory stimulation. Capsocycin, the chemical in chilly peppers interferes with the nerves that send 'feeling full' messages to the brain. They stimulate the endorphins of the tongue. It causes overeating. So if you want to loose weight, lay off the excessive chillies.

9. Normally people eat rice for lunch and chapattis for dinner. It is advised the other way around. Chapattis keep you fit and light for the entire day and rice is heavy on stomach, though easily digestible.

10. An unplanned student's life style needs a thirty minute simple exercise like walking, jogging, playing an outdoor game or yoga. You should burn your calories in

a systematic way. When you go for 30-minute walk you burn 100 calories, and at a gym you burn 150. Going four times up and down a three storied building burns up 120 calories and banging your head against a wall for an hour consumes 150 calories. If you eat one pizza it adds up 600 calories and to burn it you have to bang your head for four hours! Decide which is best for you.

You may ask me, "If I were to stop eating delicious food, reduce gossiping and cut down entertainment and TV... then what do I live for?" You need not abstain totally from tasty food and become Sanyasi. Take one 'Study and Food Holiday' per week. That day is yours. For the remaining days, practice eating norms. Eating norms is neither about eating less nor about eating tasteless food. It is about eating your favourite foods but in proportions that ensure hormonal balance. Be calorie conscious. Foods that appear beautiful and tempting are not necessarily healthy. Take the example of cool drinks. They have polyethylene glycol, which is used as antifreeze in automobiles. The bubbles and fizz, which excites you is due to the phosphoric acid, which burns your innards. It increases acidity in your body and causes problem to your intestines and teeth. Don't be fooled by the label 'diet drink'. It is the biggest joke. The varying quantity of saccharin used in the manufacture of cool drinks gives you different tastes. They may cause insomnia, irritability, weakness, dizziness and headaches.

Your daily food: Do you want to fight out your laziness? Get rid of pimples on your cheeks? Control your hair fall? Do you intend to double your abilities? Want to bubble with energy? Then cultivate the following food habits:

- On waking up: Two glasses of water, a bowl of fruit pieces of apple, black grapes, mango, watermelon (more), Papaya (more) and orange. If your fridge cannot accommodate all the fruits every day, take a single variety of your choice. Acidic fruits like red grapefruit and lemons cause the strongest detoxifying effect. Citrus fruit, tomatoes and pineapples are also acidic fruits. Squeeze three oranges, two mandarins and half a red grapefruit for breakfast. It's the quickest energy supplement to freshen you up in the morning!
- For 'every' one-hour: A glass of buttermilk, carrot or orange juice or water with Soya powder. Tight-capped plastic glasses are available now in the market to carry on with you a variety of fruit juices and Soya water. The chances of the juices spilling over are absolutely zero.

- Before going for work: Idly/ vada/ dosa / sandwich / cornflakes or puri, anything of your choice. Eat well, but see that what you eat does not exceed 600 calories. Perhaps this needs a little clarification between heavy food and high calorie food. You can eat around ten idlies or five puries to make it belly-full. But if you are going to take them with groundnut or coconut chutney, the calories would be double and you have to reduce the quantity. That is how you have to balance between both.
- Lunch: Two chapattis with cooked vegetable or egg curry, dal without oil, without pickles or hot chutney and small quantity of curd rice.
- Evening snacks : No oily stuff. Add some vegetable salads. Carrot is the best.
- Dinner: Rice and rasam with curry. Keep away from curd and non-vegetarian stuff at least three days in a week.
- Night: At least 3 glasses of water, one glass of buttermilk.
- Before sleep: A banana (if you are not over-weight) and if you like it with a glass of milk.

Fruits have a very positive effect on the brain, just like carrots. So if you want to stimulate your brain functions eat fresh fruit. One of the substances that fruit contains is natural sugar. They stimulate the brain so we can think faster and recall information more quickly. There are many other substances that fruits contain which scientists think, stimulate our brain. Begin to practice eating what I suggested here and am sure you will find that your ability to think clearly improves and you will also find that your responses are faster and you would definitely do better in your exams.

Negative foods: Here is a list of things that have negative effect on the functioning of the brain: White flour, especially in combination with cheese, refined sugar, proteins (meat) and starch (potatoes) forms a sticky substance in the intestines. The intestines need more blood to digest and because of this activity you feel sleepy. Avoid junk foods like Pani-poori, Chat, Pav-bhazi and Mirchi bazzi in the evening before your studies.

Drinking lots of juices and buttermilk keeps you out of your inclination to eat fast foods. You may find it difficult, particularly when your friends are 'enjoying' it, but once you find the in-built energies showing up, you start loving it. You would realise

how to eat to live and not to live to eat. And anyway you have a weekly holiday to dream for the remaining six days!

Certain non-vegetarian stuff is tasty, because when animals are slaughtered or killed with a bow, while dying, violently beat their legs, spin with pain and roll over with grief. The hormones and juices thus released spread all through their body and give the taste that people enjoy. At the height of cruelty, in certain religions and cults, people close all the nine holes of the body of an animal with chillies and masala... and leave it to die. With lots of throbbing pain and anguish, the animal curls on the ground and the meat is supposed to be tasty. This is also the reason for the heavy demand of the meat of birds and animals that participated in fights (cock and bullfights).

Keep off mutton and chicken at least six days a week. The adrenaline released during the death of the animal, though tasty, plays on your brain and intelligence. If you cannot avoid, go for eggs and fish, which are more easily digestible and healthy. This may be the reason why, though not scientifically proved, pure vegetarians are presumed to be intelligent scholars.

Boost may enhance a cricketer's energy but one has to boost his own pleasant energy from within himself with a systematic way of life. Laziness is nothing more than the habit of 'resting before you get tired'. With a simple alteration in your food habits and exercise, I assure you, that you can declare war against your No. 1 weakness, i.e. laziness and win.

Keep it in mind that you are in the intermediate stage of life. You are investing for your future. Your six-year sacrifices of small pressures keep you happy for next sixty years. You can have excellent food in a five star hotel or on board a flight, if you can postpone eating that junk food while studying.

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Indecisiveness

Indecisiveness is
Grandson of apprehension,
Son of fear...
Indecisiveness is
Father of delay... and
Grandfather of worry

A lobster, when left high and dry among the rock by the waves, has no instinct or energy enough to work his way back to the sea, but waits for the sea to come to him. If it does not come, he remains where he is and dies, although the slightest effort would enable him to reach the waves, which are perhaps within a yard of him. Some human are like lobsters, men stranded on the rocks of indecision and procrastination, who, instead of putting forth their own energies, are waiting for some grand billow of good fortune to set them afloat.

Indecision is another weakness, develops with our age. It is indirectly linked with laziness and procrastination or may be due to fear of failure. Indecisive people cannot judge between future gains and present losses or vice versa. Procrastinators are always doubtful. 'Doubt' has a two-way effect. In a positive sense it cautions us to hesitate before acting and warns us to apply more rational methods. 'Doubt' in the negative sense delays effort and hinders result.

Many a times a decision makes you happy, but you are not with its possible outcome. It is like deciding to go for IIT without basic foundation. The decision certainly makes you happy, but the tough study process and final failure make you unhappy. On the other hand sometimes you may dislike a decision but excited about the outcome. This is like selling your ancestral property. If you can live with both (the process as well as the possible outcome), this is the wisest way of life you should

follow.

Your decision-making sometimes depends on others. 'What you want to be?' ask any kid, the reply would be, 'doctor... engineer.... M.B.A.... I.A.S....' Others influence us right from our childhood. Just because your father said so, you wanted to be a doctor. As your mother wanted to be a dancer, but could not, she wants you to become a dancer. Because your neighbour's son is an engineer and drawing a five-figured salary or your friend's sister is in America, your people want you to opt for that course. You are fascinated by the most popular student in your class and adopt his path. Sometimes your lecturer suggests and your entire group decide to follow it.

'What is wrong?' You may ask. Before fixing your targets have you considered your abilities and skills? Before opting for a particular career did you visualise whether the demand stays till you complete your course? Are you interested in the subject or influenced by its charisma? If you are intermediate student, think whether to opt for Dentistry, specialization in Veterinary science or Agriculture in case you are not able to get a seat in Medicine. Never be too confident. Think of all the various alternatives. If you don't get through your entrance test for professional course, think of other alternatives... in advance! Don't opt for the course in the last minute, because you have no other alternative.

A student could not get a seat in his interested Triple E group in engineering counselling. His parents wanted him to be a B. Tech; whatever the group may be, and in whatever worthless college it may me. He refused and joined in a commerce course. He topped there. He acquired a Masters degree in Management from a reputed Business school. He was last in the list as an aspirant for Engineering seat, but top as a commerce student. He is now earning of six-figure salary.

Realise your true interests, likes and dislikes before dreaming. Never dream just because it is safe, comfortable and lucrative unless it is achievable.

As said earlier, being unable to take a decision at right time is called 'decidophobia'. It is more dangerous sometimes, than a wrong decision. It is more harmful than a hasty decision.

Let us suppose a girl wants to buy a railway ticket. People are thronging at the booking counter. She waited for one hour. The train left. The reasons for her failure could be: Being a lady, she is inhibited to enter the crowd as the gents dominated the

counter... Embarrassed to request someone to help... Did not have enough courage to go and complain to the Station Master about the improper queue... Not confident about her abilities to convince the Ticket Inspector the reason for getting into the train without a proper ticket. Whatever may be the cause she missed her train. In the same fashion, many times we miss the opportunities with our doubts.

Lazy people wait till the last moment and take a hasty decision under pressure and tension. They are prone to more risks. Here is a real life incident that tells about the dangers of hasty decisions under the influence of fright or anger.

A woman came home to find her husband in the kitchen, shaking frantically with what looked like a wire running from his waist towards the electric kettle. Intending to jolt him away from the deadly current, she whacked him with a handy plank of wood, breaking his arm. Until that moment he had been happily listening to his Walkman.

Decision-making and Procrastination: Decision means choosing between various options. Normally students are guided by their parents and influenced by their friends regarding their choice, career future course of study and job. Here are five basic steps to make a wise decision.

Think of as many alternatives as possible. Never stick on to the first one that occurred to your mind and try to strengthen it.

When you ask a person for an advice or to take a decision on your behalf... think! Does he know as much about the problem as you do? Are his values the same as yours?

Never relay on 'one' expert opinion. They may be biased or not scientifically correct. Search for more information with other professionals, books, online services and newspapers. Visualise the outcome of each alternative.

Consider whether it is for you or someone else. If your decision is to have an effect on others, take into consideration their values also.

Consider your capacities. Never be too optimistic or too pessimistic. Assess the pros and cons and what you are loosing or gaining by your decision.

Review constantly, whether you are going in the right direction and getting

expected results. If not, rather than sailing towards an impossible target, change the goal. Many students and their parents undergo complexity at this juncture, unable to change their fixed targets.

Perceptions differ. Take suggestions but final decision is yours. On the other hand, leave your prejudices and expectations while listening to a good advice and be open. Many people never like to listen which is not acceptable to them.

My best suggestion is to enter the shoes of Pandavas, so that you can visualise the problem from various angles before taking a decision, as the five have different styles of thinking.

Think like Yudhistrara who knows how to stand by ethics and when to leave them. He is always in process control, looks at the problems using his intuition and ready to understand the people who cannot appreciate his reasoning. Arjuna is the best technician and also tries to see why it might not work. He prefers to spot fatal flaws and risks before embarking on a course of action. To get his doubts clarified, he takes the expert's advice. Bheema believes in his strength. He keeps going when everything looks gloomy and difficult. Nakula is expert in training horses. A person who can tame animals is the best in communicative skills and understanding other. Sahadeva can look cautiously and defensively at all the awful points of the decision. When contingency plans are required the other four depend on him.

When you take a decision basing on the above five virtues, the success by name 'Krishna' is always with you. Then you neither delay your work nor fail.

How to be organised: The best way to fight laziness and procrastination is the Time and Movement management. John Grey, a behavioural analyst, evaluated life histories of many great people, to find out what is the most common quality in all of them. He says that it may be their confidence, communication skill, determination or intelligence that might have put them on a higher plane, but the most important common trait is that they know exactly what to do, accurately how and precisely when. And above all, they unerringly know the value of doing 'it' when compared to their other tasks. Every person is an architect.

An architect's job is three-fold, One: To define the spaces, Two: To dress the interior and exterior and Three: To execute the first two. His greatness is characterised by his ability to define spaces. Space definition is "A place for everything and

everything in its place". Looks simple but has a wider meaning when looked in life's perspective.

We have to take into consideration all our needs, requirements and desires and define the spaces available. A bigger place is not the solution. In fact it will be a problem, managing the extra space. Take the example of a purse. It has defined spaces for coins, notes and credit cards.

Divide the dressing table by defining clear spaces for the comb, the powder and other material. Decide where you want to leave your footwear and key chain. No more tension before going to college in searching for them. Once you experience the joy of organising things around you, you know how much price people pay for living a disorganised life. Start the day with folding the bed sheet immediately on waking up. Anyway it is your job. Don't postpone it.

Getting organised is all about defining a time for everything and doing everything within that time. A time for studies, a time for friends, a time for the family, sports, television and finally a time to go to bed and wake up. An organised student is his own architect for every resource available to him, his space, time, and finance. Plan first and adhere to it next.

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Time Controlling:

People who cannot
Manage their time
Are of two types

Time killers
And
Space destroyers

When you can discover your time and space management, you make your life easier and more organised. A person's organisational style is composed of individual interests, needs, energy level and aptitude. People can be classified into two broad categories, Time controllers or Space controllers. According to John Grey, there are five types of time controllers:

a) Cliff Hangers: Some people are in the habit of delaying a decision or task till the last minute and need an outside pressure to force them to start it. They are called 'Cliff Hangers'. They are poor in budget and time management. Cliff Hangers should cultivate the habit of maintaining a perfect calendar and create an artificial pressure. Creating an artificial pressure means placing an Interesting task after the 'Important' task. For example, suppose you have the following tasks for the night: 1. Talking with your friend. 2. Watching TV for half an hour. 3. Dinner. 4. Writing your class notes for one hour before sleep...! If you are a cliff Hanger, take decision to keep your dinner as the last item after completion of your notes. It is as simple as that.

b) Perfectionists: In their eagerness to strive for excellence, some people get so involved with each and every detail that they never complete the assignment. They are called 'Perfectionists'. They normally don't understand that what might be an average performance to them is perfectly acceptable to others. They are more often prone to discouragement. If you are a perfectionist, then you should be able to differentiate the priorities that are either significant or urgent and lower your standards pertaining to insignificant tasks, so that you can finish the job on time. Having said so, I want to tell you that I am also a victim of perfectionism and trying to overcome my deficiancy.

c) Skippers: Skippers are those students who are allergic to details and are more interested in planning than in perfect execution. They go after huge pictures and are great in dealing with the overall issues, but impatient for finer points. A student who does not check through the answer sheet after completion can also be called a skipper. If you are overconfident and allergic to details, you are in trouble when simple details constitute an important role in the task. You should learn to develop

checklists, stop at intervals and inspect your actions.

d) Fence Sitters: If you are in the habit of putting off the decisions (seeking ideal solutions) and have trouble in making choices, you are called a 'Fence Sitter'. Being afraid of making a wrong choice, fence sitters make no choice at all. A fence sitter wants to host a party to his colleagues on his promotion, but postpones it beyond date because he has never done it before. These people do not know how to start moving. The best solution to overcome the syndrome is to narrow down the tasks, write down the possible alternatives, rank each against others and create firm deadlines.

e) Hoppers: People who try to complete many tasks at a time and thus leave many unfinished are called 'Hoppers'. They enjoy the speed and variety and eager to have immediate gratification. They may use different energy levels and keep themselves active, enabling them to complete several projects at once. Unfortunately many hoppers are not as effective as they believe to be. If you are a student with hopper attitude and your style of studying is ruining you, turn your deeds into Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Timely (SMART). Divide the masterwork into small tasks; allot time to each of the mini goal. This habit gives you the immediate feedback.

These five personalities are not different. We can see all these traits in us, in different proportions depending on the situation. Knowing what we want, how to get there, know exactly what we can control and cannot control, know when to relax and how to push on towards our goal, that is all about, how to be organised in spite of yourself.

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Space controlling:

If you 'pass on' your time
Time will fail you...!

After time controlling, it is space controlling. When we are immersed in great many activities, it is almost impossible to have a mess-free existence. But still we can have a place for everything. There are five categories of space controllers also.

The standards are up to you. Maintaining a neat dressing table reflects your personality. You should know what you want, how to get there and what to do if you cannot go there. Goethe, the nineteenth century poet and scientist correctly said, "Things which matter most must never be at the mercy of things that matter least". And that is 'organising the life'.

Breaking the Habit of Postponing: Postponement, otherwise called procrastination is the product of lethargy. Procrastination is 'Putting-off of an action which requires immediate attention, usually by focusing on some other distraction'. It is derived from the Latin words Pro (for) and Cras (tomorrow).

Procrastination mainly includes 'difficulty to initiate' and can be a persistent trait in some people, known as chronic procrastinators. It may pertain to reading a subject or writing an essay. Students postpone their studies taking shelter with the argument that they are just waiting for 'right moment' to get inspiration. A silly cause like 'room being not tidy' may be adequate for you to delay the right moment. But note the words of a philosopher, who rightly said: "Procrastination is the art of keeping up with yesterday".

The following are the excuses normally you make to postpone your work. The counters are given against each excuse. Paste the following table near your study table.

Acquire the skill to start the work 'without ceremony'. It is one of the main skills of time management. Start something pleasant and slowly shift to more complicated one. The best way is your own self-assertion.

- Visualise what you could achieve. Imagine having all your work done before the deadlines and sleep peacefully.
- Imagine six hours work a day and then going out without a 'guilty' conscience.
- Imagine getting good grades without having to panic and sit up all night on the dooms day.
- Try and work out on a particular roadblock that is preventing you to initiate the work. The faster you find a way to get things going, the quicker you will finish them.
- If you really don't like your course or some subjects in your course, think about how you can make the changes you need.

Better to act now and find something to clear your hurdle, than glide to the future and then repent. With my experience I tell you, the best moments in my life are those, when I complete a manuscript on date as promised, and handover to my editor, publisher or producer.

Procrastination and Time management: "The bad news is time flies. The good news is you're the pilot", said Albert Einstein. Administration of time is one of those things that is neither taught in schools nor told by parents. They have just three words to say, "Please hurry up".

You have only 1440 minutes in any day. Sometimes you should be ruthless with your tasks and time. A person can never decide what is important to him, unless he is free from his magnetic fields. Watching idiot box or chatting may be the magnetic fields of a student. For a die-hard lover of cricket, today's match would be very urgent and most important than tomorrow's annual test. Organising time is based on two aspects, 'prioritising' and 'adjusting'. Regulate all your tasks into the following groups:

a) The first group consists of essential tasks like studying for next day's exam, attending a doctor on high fever, paying the school fees before last day etc.

b) Last day of the exhibition, first day morning show of the favourite actor, Last hour of the one-day cricket match may be urgent but surely not essential. But when you feel that if you miss them, you cannot watch them with the same enthusiasm, and thus can't avoid them, they become indispensable and essential.

c) Certain tasks need not be executed immediately but are important and help you in the long run, like studying for daily one hour from the first day till the examination. This category also includes accomplishing responsibilities that put you in trouble if you don't do, but can wait, e.g. completing the notes on Saturday evening that is to be submitted on Monday morning.

d) Discussing about Harry Potter book is neither significant nor urgent.

Normally students prefer to carry on ABDC or ABCD on the same preferential order. But the best policy is ACBD. Watch carefully the category C. Everything that falls under this group is certainly going to be 'important' sooner or later. A prudent student tries to complete a job that is essential, before it becomes crucially urgent.

The entire secret of time sense lies in understanding the most significant fact that 'everything that is important becomes urgent sooner or later'.

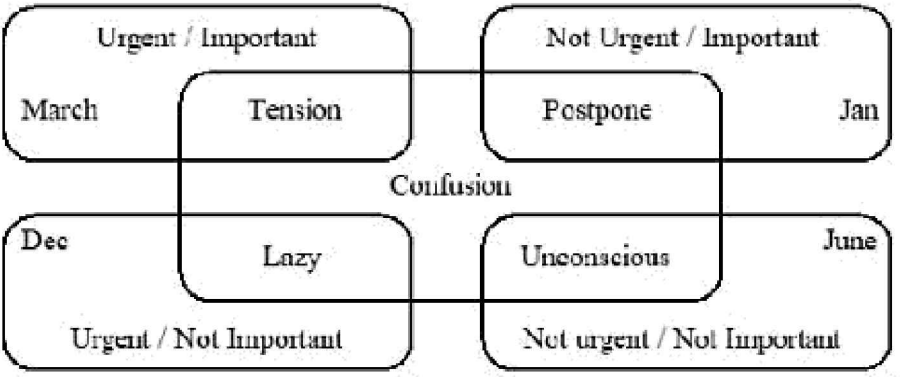
The main reasons for unsuccessful time management are four:

1. Incapability of arranging the tasks in preferential order.

2. Getting attracted by more powerful unbeneficial deeds, and continuing them.

3. Irregular habits like excessive sleeping, unnecessary gossiping and late night-outs.

4. Unwillingness to complete the necessary work with dedication and discipline.



Look at the right lower part of the table, which shows tasks that are "not urgent and not important". A student in the month of June feels that there is a lot of time to begin his studies. He never takes cognisance of the examinations coming ahead in the month of March next year. He is unconscious about the urgency and importance of the exams. This is the first stage. Slowly, as the half-yearly examinations approach, he feels the urgency, but he is not yet interested to start. At this stage, he conveniently thinks that he knows the subject and can get through easily. With that over-confidence, he ignores the subject and becomes lazy. Later as the examination date advances, he settles down to start his studies. At this juncture, he finds certain subjects difficult and tough. He gets confused. He postpones studying those subjects. Suddenly, everything becomes important and urgent. In other words, as floodwater from all small streams join to make a hell out of it, all works flow to the left upper block of the above table (Urgent and Important), creating tension to the student

Where the time goes? : Many education motivators tell about time management theory while discussing about daily routine. But the said theory is an old one. Instead of managing the available time, try to look it from a different angle. Where your time goes? To assess where your time goes, answer the following questions.

- On the average, how many hours do you sleep and nap?
- How many hours a day do you spend on meals and snacks?
- How much time you spend in games and watching TV?
- How much time do you spend commuting to and from campus and

spend in class?

Multiply by 7 to arrive at a weekly total. Add weekly schedules like weekend parties and movies etc. There are 168 hours in a week. Now you can deduct to find out how many hours remain for studying, since this is the only one activity that is not included above. If the difference is on the high side, the mystery is to be solved.

When a defeat knocks your door, accept it as a signal that your plans are not sound, recognise your mental block and rebuild them to sail once more toward your coveted goal. Being defeated is often a temporary condition. 'Giving up' is what makes it permanent. Note that defeat is not the worst of failures. Not to have tried is the true failure.

a) First, conquer your unwanted desires that take your time. Try to come out of your magnetic fields.

b) Secondly, control your food habits. Psychologists say, the erratic food habits of children, like eating snacks at irregular intervals have an imperative bearing on their time sense.

c) You should be able to say 'no' to any person who demands your time unnecessarily. You can learn to spot people, who are your time killers.

d) They are persons who pop into your study room for a chat. You have every right to politely postpone the conversation (unless you like it and nobody can help you then).

e) Avoid those who promise to meet you but do not keep up their time. More importantly 'you' keep up your time with them.

Here the power of fascinating and charismatic fields peeps in again. For example, you tell your friend that you would meet him in the evening to discuss a difficult subject. Another friend lures you to a movie. As you have an appointment already, avoid the movie or at least ring up and tell the first one about the cancellation. When we value others' time, automatically others start respecting ours.

Managing time appears to be a difficult process initially, but once we are accustomed to adjust our preferences, it is easy. I have been writing for periodicals every week for the past 30 years and have never missed a single dead line even when I was

directing a movie with Mega-star.

Never excuse yourself with the time constraint or your busy schedule. Note that people who are busy have more time to complete everything. Hence the proverb: 'If you want to construct a building go to the busiest architect'. The surest way to be late is to have plenty of time.

Procrastination is suicide on the instalment plan. Shun idleness. It is rust that attaches itself to the most brilliant metals. The only thing wrong with doing nothing is that you never know when you're finished. The idle man does not know what it is to enjoy rest, for he has not earned it. Tomorrow is the only day in the year that appeals to a lazy man. The lazier a man is, the more he plans to do tomorrow. Laziness is nothing more than the habit of resting before you get tired. The laziest man I ever met put popcorn in his pancakes so they would turn over by themselves. Too many young people itch for what they want without scratching for it. Determine never to be idle... It is wonderful how much may be done if we are always doing.

When to study:

Flexibility and suppleness are important parts of mental fitness. Many scientists, psychiatrists and psychologists experimented and found the relation between memory, concentration and the 'time'. After a good sleep, the Electro- Magnetic Pathways between the neurons would be strong and fresh. Look at the following graph that gives an idea about the time when the human brain will be upbeat, vigorous and full of potential.

The graph reveals that from 5 am to 9 am, the concentration is almost 100%. It is not the early morning atmosphere, but the freshness of having had the sleep that makes the neurons sharp. Hence a student should sleep 2 times a day, restricting the total sleep to 7 hours. Great people culture the habit of sleeping even during small intervals, like while travelling, after lunch etc. it has three advantages.

Your neurons will be clear after 'every' awakening.

You can utilise your idle and boring time (such as waiting in a retiring room for a late-running train) comfortably sleeping in a sitting posture.

You can reduce your night sleep to a greater extent by compartmentalising it.

One day – two dawns:

A psychologist by name Tony Bussan experimented on the reading abilities of various students. He found that the brain would be reluctant to receive the in-take after certain time of reading. For this purpose, he divided the students into three categories 1. Intelligent 2. Above the average 3. Average.

The graph shows that the students cannot concentrate after 3 hours of continuous study. The levels of concentration may differ from one student to another, but the effect is the same. Hence it is not advisable to read for more than 3 hours at stretch. Then how is it possible to complete the huge syllabus? The answer is... dividing the day into two.

To achieve the best results, try this technique. Read for 2 hours in the early morning. After coming back from the school or college, sleep for some time in the evening. On waking up brush your teeth, take bath, have breakfast (!), close the curtains and create an artificial early morning atmosphere and... start reading.

This is called 'One day-two dawn theory'. As you know that your concentration levels are at peak in the early morning, you are creating a dawn.

Cultivate the habit of napping for ten minutes in the library in the lunchtime. It refreshes your neurons. Your friends may tease you but soon you would be realising that it is better than unnecessary chatting.

You can go to sleep within minutes by self-hypnosis. This concept is discussed in detail at a later stage of this book while describing the 12-C technique. This saves lot of unnecessary pre-sleep time.

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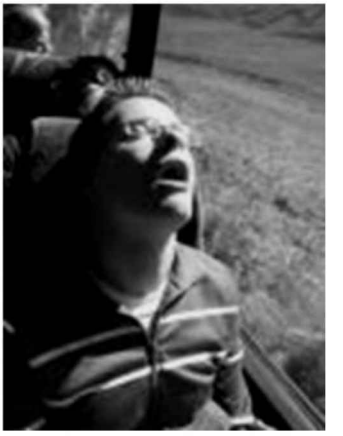
Hypersomnia:



Sleep is like a forest
Difficult to enter into
Sleep is like an oasis
Difficult to come out
Sleeping on a bed
Unless you are dead
Bliss for the weary head

You need between seven to eight hours of sleep in order to rest your mind and body. But doctors say that more than sixty percent of students of the total population of the world have sleeping disorders. This is due to their academic and social schedules like late movies, energy exhaustion, and intake of disorganised food, caffeine and above all 'the tensions'.

The most commonly recognised sleeping disorder is the inability to obtain adequate sleep. Often overlooked, but more dangerous and potentially harmful indication in students is hypersomnia i.e., excessive daytime sleep and napping at inappropriate times. This 'early to bed – late to rise' syndrome includes unwillingness to wake up in time, irritability when being forcibly woke up and lethargy after waking up.

Good sleep is a chain...
That holds body and health.
Excessive sleep is a wine...
That spoils time and wealth.

Drowsiness: Sleep has three stages, Slow Wave Sleep, Rapid Eye Movement sleep and

Deep Sleep. Pre and post sleeping is called 'Drowsy Stage'. To reduce drowsy time on bed, the student has to follow these tips:

As told earlier more complex carbohydrates, found in foods such as grains and pulses are recommended in the day, and avoidance of any material containing refined sugar, chocolates and cool drinks in the night.

After dinner, walk 'alone' for ten minutes in the night and return to studies.

Sandwich the uninteresting subject between two interesting subjects while studying in the nights.

Perform some sort of physical activity for ten minutes in the morning. Throw a Frisbee with your friends or just go for a jog. It considerably increases your energy level throughout the day and eases your hypersomnia.

Early morning hours are the best time to study. Don't waste them. After being ready for studies, searching for books and other study materials in the early morning spoils your mood. Keep everything ready for the morning at your study table before you go to bed the previous night, so you can get going in the morning with a minimum of hassle.

Make a List of priorities and estimate how long it will take. Then draw up a plan and study. Mark the deadlines.

It might be a painful process but soon you will have a sense of direction. As the quantum of work is slowly reduced, the sense of satisfaction gives you more energy. Once you have got started, revise the estimate of your capability upwards if you find you have untapped potential. Above all, remember that it takes time to learn to plan.

Sleep gates: We don't become gradually more tired as the day wears on. In fact, we feel more refreshed with a 'second wave of energy' between 6 and 9 p.m. It is the mid afternoon period that we feel exhausted. We have 'sleep gates' that open at every four hours. That's why, a mid-day dip in the energy, compensated by lunch, makes us sleepy in the afternoons. Hence scientists say that a half-an-hour siesta refreshes a person for the entire day. As said earlier, students should develop the habit of napping for few minutes in the afternoon, instead of spending the 'leftover lunchtime' in unnecessary gossiping.

Saturday Night Fever: I am not advising you to sleep 'for hours' in the afternoon. Never do it particularly on Sundays. It breaks your sleep cycle. Regrettably some parents permit their children to watch the late night movies on Saturday nights, considering that next day is a holiday. In turn, children compensate it by sleeping on Sunday afternoons. They don't understand that the effect continues on Monday also, disturbing the biological clock. The drowsiness continues for next two to three days.

Insomnia: Some students get far too little sleep. This becomes even worse as exams approach. Books come out, TV goes off and movies are cancelled. Suddenly you are faced with what may be "Do or Die" situations. You stay up all night going over and over every note, page after page in the text. And in the morning, with another revision through the books, you rush to the examination. You sit down and look at the paper. The questions look familiar. You remember reading about them just the night before. The sad part is that you probably already knew the answers to most of those questions, but the previous night of cramming and sleep deprivation makes those answers inaccessible. And this is certainly not a practice to be followed.

So what's a better plan? Read one hour a day from day one. But if exams are already at the near future, it may be too late for that. So, spend some time going over those parts of the lessons that have proved most difficult for you. Do a quick review of the rest and then sleep peacefully. Relax while you are in journey to the examination centre, don't read in your auto, and most importantly don't talk with your friends one hour before your exam.

How to break late awakening:

'When I wake up, on the edge of the horizon I see the sun' said one.

'Very good habit' complimented the other.

'But I sleep near my west-side window' concluded former.

Old joke but consider your Lifestyle. Sleeping late and awakening behind schedule becomes a difficult cycle to break. When you sleep till late in the morning, it is difficult to get sleep in the night. The best way is... choose a particular day. Irrespective of when you went to bed the previous night, get up early. Don't sleep during the mid-day. Withstand a demanding siesta. Continue this ritual for three to four days. You would get back your normal daily sleep cycle.

Don't be too sanguine. Normally students are exceptionally optimistic while preparing their work schedules. They over-assess their capacities and in turn become sceptic for not completing it in time. Note that only an exceptionally extraordinary student can regularly study more than forty hours a week and grasp everything. Forget about exceptions. Work out sensibly what standard you can achieve and start working towards that. It is hard to work or study more than one hour at one time without a break. Give yourself generous time off in your study schedules.

The five mental blocks: A student wishes to get a rank by reading well. He procrastinates. A girl wants to loose weight by avoiding sweets. She adjourns her resolve. A kid tries to control his TV mania. He fails.

Why are we always fond of the final target but not the course of action? Why don't we carry out things that we desperately want to? Elders say that it is due to lack of will power. They constantly advise us to develop strong 'determination'. But such advice is often absurd and useless, because it cannot be that easily followed. If that is so easy, why did not 'they' practice it in their student days? The reasons lay somewhere else. Our determination is not strong enough to develop our willpower. There are other constraints otherwise called roadblocks that play on our determination.

To build up strong strength of will, the important step is to eliminate those roadblocks first. There are five psychosomatic blocks that hamper our way to build up self-discipline and accomplish our good intentions.

1. Environment: It plays important role in determining your tastes and habits. Why a girl temporarily postpones her resolve to cut her weight? Because, her friends lure her. While enjoying the deserts at a party, they force her saying that there is no harm in tasting it just once. They do not support her resolve or good cause. Sometime you are compelled by your friends to 'taste' something new and harmful along with them and start enjoying the thrill. Thus environment plays a big role in your career.

If you feel that your studies are not encouraging, your concentration power is deteriorating, and want to re-organise yourself for betterment, change your surroundings, study atmosphere and last but not least, your friend's circle.

2. Hidden forces: Sometimes we attribute certain irrational reasons for our failure, without analysing our correct hidden weak spots and deficiencies. A medico who gets poor marks in anatomy may excuse himself saying 'because medicine is my dad's choice I landed up at this'. A person, who lost heavily in his new business may defend saying that he had started his business on an inauspicious day. Many a times in our every-day life, we are prone to such type of self-deceptions. The only way to conquer our deficiencies like procrastination, fear and tension is by rationalising our thinking (not easy) and locating the correct cause for the mental block instead of attributing it to outside factors.

3. Self-criticism: Continuous self-evaluation is necessary to reach the correct target, but it should be positive. Constant negative self–criticism and own disapprovals lead to 'Resigning to success'. The powerful negative thoughts and endless self-hypnotic depressing suggestions like 'I am weak and ugly', 'I cannot do this', 'nobody can help me', are the destructive permanent mental blocks to success. Unfortunately we think more of what we do not have.

4. Captivating activities: Socialising late nights, listening to continuous music and watching small screen may enthral you but they grab your attention so powerfully that once you are preoccupied with these activities, you cannot 'pull out'. With a small practice, you can distance from these stimulants. It is difficult but not impossible. Now that you have read this book, next time while watching your small screen, switch off the idiot box and in the quite and calm stillness think for a while, "What is more healthier way to spend my time?" The silence helps you to demolish your delusion created by the said box, to accomplish a better thing.

5. Coping with defeat: A person starts enjoying the artificial comforts provided by a group of forces, leading to dangerous terminals. For instance, a student may consume excess tea or coffee or smokes a cigarette, with a genuine intention to be awake and study late in the nights. In due course, it becomes his vice. He knows his weakness but cannot help at that juncture. It is called 'coping with the defeat'. It is the same reason how an overprotective parent generates a dependent child, who in turn takes pleasure in his dependency in the initial phase, to suffer at a later stage.

Stress management: We have discussed at length the three devils and how to fight them out. The king of devils and the force behind all your weaknesses is 'stress'. Once you prevail over your stress causes, half the battle is won. But how can we?

Here is a way.

Japanese love fresh fish. But the waters close to Japan have not held much of them. The farther the fishermen went, the longer it took to return with their dead catch. To solve this problem, fishing companies installed freezers on their boats to store the dead fish. However, the Japanese could taste the difference. So fishing companies installed large fish tanks in the boats and stuff the live fish. They were alive but because they did not move for days, they lost their fresh-fish taste and it was a big problem for the fishing companies. So how did they solve this problem?

They now add a small shark to each tank. The shark eats a few fish, but most of the fish arrive in a very lively state, because they are 'challenged' as they have to continuously run for their life.

What is the total of all the numbers from 'one' to 'eight'? The answer is thirty-six. If it is from 1 to 199 then what is the total? The answer goes into thousands. But which is a simpler question? Many of us think that the former is easier. But if you know the arithmetic, second question is simpler. It is 100 multiplied by 199.

The above example is applicable to our life. We don't see things as they are; we see them as we are! We make important issues more difficult, by worrying about simple things or by thinking of those problems, which we cannot solve.

This is the reason why certain people never smile, though laughter is the shortest distance to success. Wherever they go, they carry the suitcases full of worries.

Dealing with stress: It is not the stress that kills us; it is our reaction to it. Draw a circle (O). Write down number-wise all the 'problems' for your worry i.e., health problems, physical weakness, inferiority complex, fear of public speaking, finances, work overload, inadequate time etc in the said circle.

We have discussed in this book, many solutions and tips to fight laziness, time control etc. Think long and if you think that you can and will follow those tips and techniques, then move the said 'problem'), erasing it from the circle. Write down in a triangle (Δ) the ○ to a square ('Action plans' that you are going to contemplate. You should now be left with three lists:

1. A list of stress origins left in the circle, which you cannot do anything thing about.

2. A list of stress roots in a square, which you can do something about.

3. A third list of 'actions' in a triangle that you are going to take to reduce stress levels.

Suppose you stammer and for that reason suffer from inferiority complex. Now in the circle you have two problems causing you stress, A. Stammering and B. Inferiority complexes due to the said stammering.

If your stammering is due to tension, you can come out of it by slowing down your speech... by reducing tension through breath control... and finally through practice. If you are confident of applying those techniques and come out of stammering, wipe off the said defect from Circle and transfer it to Square. On the Action paper you write down the steps that you are going to take, to develop your speaking skills.

If your stammer is a physical disability, the chances to overcome it are less. Your stammering problem 'continues to stay' in the Circle. But you can come out of your 'Inferiority Complex' by excelling in some other field like writing, instrumental music or painting. Then your problem of inferiority complex comes the Square.

Now is the final step. Stop worrying about the weaknesses and problems that are left in the circle, as you cannot do anything about them. Once you stop bothering about those things that you cannot change, you will get power to win over the stress causes that you can alter, with the help of the your third triangle 'action plans'.

With regard to stress relating to your exams, stop studying for the exam one hour before your normal sleep on the previous day. Till you go to the exam, recollect the subject matter mentally. Relax. Try to play jokes on breakfast table. Go. Receive the question paper from the examiner smiling. Close your eyes for a minute and take deep breath for a minute before start writing your exam. You win. I challenge.

Courage is not the lack of fear. It is acting in spite of it. When fear knocks your door, let the courage open it. You would find nothing outside.

You know your weaknesses. The most important strategy is to 'bounce into' the problem. With a fear of failure, people normally hesitate to shoot into trouble. If you cannot leap into the problem, you start living with the problem, resigning to success.

The life of any problem is less than yours. It has not come along with your birth and

not going to stay till death. Problems are like thorns. Unless you have them, you cannot experience the pleasantness after removing them. Envisage your life without any problem or challenge and you will be bored with it.

We struggle with life balance simply because we cannot decide what is really important to us. We can try to avoid making choices by our indecision or doing nothing. But even that is a decision!

Three ways of thinking

We are at the end of the chapter 'our weaknesses'. To combat our weaknesses and problems, the first and foremost sutra is to change our attitude. Three ways of thinking helps the students in this regard, Positive, Possibility and Lateral thinking.

You may not be a millionaire or Mother Theresa but still you have your own entity. Some people dislike you, not because you are bad, but may be because they don't like your philosophy or your ideology does not suit them or (and above all) may be they are 'jealous' of you.

Do you realise that every day someone somewhere would be thinking of you for at least a second? Do you know that a minimum of five people on this planet love or adore you and be fond of your talent however small it may be. More than ten people may like your smile or your personality and you might not have even known their name? There may be one person ready even to die for you.

Never did you realise that life would not have been so cheerful for some people in this world including your parents, had you not been there and 'you' made that difference? Who knows? You may be the person who would change the history.

Somebody asked a beggar if there would be a difference if he had not existed in this world. The latter pointed out at the pavement and said, 'Yes. Instead of ten, nine would have been there'. And that is liveliness.

You are not a side-character in the story based on your life. You are the icon of your autobiographical movie. Believe that your presence in this world has some purpose. You have contributed something to the society or at least made a difference to someone.

Some other times we are frustrated with our misfortunes, unpleasant incidents and

with people around us. But it is temporary and natural. Look at some people. They are constantly pessimistic, gloomy, negative and cynical. They are not happy about themselves. They utter words like, "This is rubbish... I rather die... none can alter my fate..." They complain about the economy, social systems and values. Politics, late running of trains, electricity failure or even a loss of a cricket match is enough to make them dreary. They curse having born in this country or in this world. They are called 'infectors' in whose company we also become cynics. Try to be away from them.

In fairy tales we read about the young warrior crossing the seven seas to fight the evil conjurer and bringing the beautiful princess back. In life those seven hurdles are: Fear, doubt, vice, laziness, frustration, anger, and self-pity. Once you conquer them, the princess is ready. Her name is 'success'. With this backdrop, let us discuss the three ways of thinking that a student should develop.

1. Positive Thinking:

Never feel sorry for what you do not have. Develop what you have. It is the concept of positive thinking. If Lata Mangeshkar felt distressed for not winning Miss India title, we would have lost one Bharat-Ratna.

Charles Dickens, a famous English writer, was poor in his childhood. As we celebrate 'Sankranti', the English also have Kites Carnival. Dickens went to playground to fly his old and torn-out kite. A rich boy heckled him, "I have lots and lots of kites to fly in the sky". Dickens also smiled and said, "I have only one kite but lots and lots of sky".

And that is positive thinking. A student may be short, black or poor. He should never feel sorry for what he does not have and suffer from low esteem. Nature has given every person some strength and you have to recognise, develop and capitalise on it.

Problem with some of the kids is that they think their brothers/sisters are being given more importance by their parents. Feeling jealous about the rich students or about the students who get first rank no way helps you. 'The more you thought of your enemy in the night, the more he won you by morning' is the Chinese proverb.

Positive thinking advocates the theory that there is still something after everything is dug out. The best example is man himself. Without positive thinking, man would

not have achieved so far. When he found how to create energy with the help of coal, he never thought that it was the end of his inventions, but continued his inventive zeal. In this process, he found electricity, solar energy and atomic power.

Charles Duel, Commissioner of Patents office, United States wrote to the President in 1899: "Our patents department can be closed permanently as there will be no further new inventions. Everything has been found out". His assumptions were proved wrong as 100 million products were invented later.

2. Possibility thinking:

If you think it is possible, the chances of it being possible are at least fifty percent. I would like to put it in a more simple way. If you think it is not possible, the chances of it not being possible are hundred percent.

In my seventh class, when my teacher was narrating that $2\,H_2 + O_2 \rightarrow 2\,H_2O$, I stood up to ask, " Sir, why can't it be $H_2 + 0 \rightarrow H_2O$". Unable to explain the logic behind it, he thrashed, "Stupid! Sit down. You will never understand the intricacies of chemistry". Then he said how difficult it is to understand Chemistry. From then, chemistry stood out as my nightmare. I never scored more than forty in that subject. Subsequently another teacher at a later stage explained the fundamentals of chemistry and was responsible to generate interest. When I became an author, I had to read Isaac Asimov and Arthur Clark to write novels based on biochemistry (Prardhana), and astronomy (Cheekatlo suryudu). I realised that chemistry is a wonderful subject and I missed it for some time.

It is very difficult to understand how, when, why and from where these phobias originate. A teacher's opening remark itself (this subject is difficult to understand. You have to concentrate hard) has its own vandalising effect on the students. Possibility thinking helps to analyse the basic cause behind our phobias, disgust and depression.

In a common compound wall three friends constructed their houses. They believe in Vastu and hence had three separate gates. They want to have separate roads also. Try to draw three lines from their houses to their gates, without intersecting each other (one line should not touch the other), in the diagram given below. It is possible. Just think. (Answer for this question no. 41 is given at the end.)

Till you achieve, it appears to be so difficult. You give this problem to your friends. When they say it is not possible, you naturally smile. Yes. The most pleasant aspect in life is 'success' and it is possible provided you try. This is all about possibility thinking.

3. Lateral Thinking:

A beggar, unable to find any food or charity from anybody on a particular day prayed God: "O God! Give me something. I promise to pay you half of what I receive today".

Surprisingly, he found a bag containing two hundred rupees. He was very happy. But his inner conscious was warning him that he should pay hundred rupees to God. The beggar did not want to part with his money. Two days passed. His fear enlarged day by day.

He got an idea. He prayed: "God! Give me another two hundred rupees today. I would give half of it".

He did not get anything. He went to the temple again and said: "Thank you for keeping the past dues also. The business is settled".

The above story, written by me when I was in my college days, was published in a monthly, Chandamma. To certain extent it is based on lateral thinking. Edward de Bono coined the term Lateral thinking in 1967. The theory sets out to challenge one of our illusions. In every situation, we think that we are in possession of all the facts and factors, ways and means. No. We are not. Let us see an example. Why should lifts, pipes, escalators take up a precious space inside a building? They could easily be located outside. But the idea of capsule lifts struck us only a few years ago. Now we can find the same pattern in big hotels. For so long, we used to unscrew the cap of a bottle to use the shampoo. Now, we can conveniently open a small lid above the cap. Simple ideas! But it has taken many years for us to think on these lines.

Lateral thinking means, taking your thought-process one step ahead. You have to move beyond your initial response. You must come to solve the problem from an unexpected angle.

Two decades ago, a question appeared in the final examination of Sociology. It carried 50 marks. The students are supposed to write a 10-pages answer quoting

various examples. One student wrote a sentence, gave back the paper and went. He got the first rank.

The question was "Explain with suitable examples. What is courage?"

The answer: "This is courage... and this is the example.".

Lateral thinking opens various hidden and unseen avenues and opportunities. When everybody feels that there is nothing further, the lateral thinker invents one more possibility. Look at the following example.

There is a horizontal line, vertical line, right slant, left slant and then? At this stage feel many that there is nothing further. But still there are opportunities to create some more lines.

This line has gone in a third dimension. Apply this principle to your life. Challenge your weaknesses. Never enter into the comfort zone. Be a performer.

IN BRIEF....

There is nothing called laziness. Only your priorities differ. You don't want to leave your attractive devils, though you want to get rid of them. It's love-hate relationship. Laziness may be physical or mental. One is fatigue and the other is boredom. Don't confuse between both of them. Arrange the place of study, change your food habits to minimise your fatigue.

When you are bored, change the subjects from un-interested to interested, or from studying to writing, Cultivate the habit of taking rest for few minutes in the afternoons to recharge yourself.

There are five mental blocks that make your study difficult. Know and eliminate them. Come out of your magnetic fields so that you can manage your time without the influence of other attractions.

Develop three ways of proactive thinking. Do not think of problems that you cannot solve, so that you can concentrate on other weaknesses.

FOUR VIRTUES

One ship sails east
And another west,
By the self-same winds
That blow
... It is the set of the sails,
And not the gales
...That tells the way
The ship should go.

A girl asked her mother what is 'wisdom'? Her mother showed the jar and asked whether she would eat a cup of sugar. "No" said the girl. "What about the maida or eggs or a spoon of essence?"

More confused, the girl said in the negative.

Then the mother said, "If all these are mixed, you would love to eat the cake. Isn't it? And wisdom is like a cake. The ingredients are intelligence, knowledge, skill, logic and experience. Individually all have their importance but worthless unless combined in correct proportions"

Knowledge: Epistemology is the branch of philosophy, derived from two Greek words episteme (knowledge) and logos (word) and deals with the origin and scope of knowledge.

Skill is the proficiency acquired through training. Soft skill is defined as the ability

that influences how we interact with each other. It includes such abilities as effective communication, creativity, analytical thinking, diplomacy, flexibility, change-readiness, and problem solving, leadership, team building and listening skills. Now a days many organisations are testing the soft skills of the candidates before selecting but it is unfortunate that these soft skills are not included in any academic syllabus.

Another part of wisdom is logic. MNCs test your logical thinking capacities also in their interviews. Logic is defined as the branch of philosophy that analyses inference. Try to solve the question below that was asked in an aptitude test for recruitment in one of the top I. T. organisations.

"A, B and C are the three suspects in a bank robbery. A and B pleaded innocence. C said B is guilty. Who is the culprit among the three, if only one is telling the truth?" The answer depends on your logical inference. (For the answer... see answer No. 40 at the end of this book)

By engaging the children in productive discussions, helping them solve different puzzles and play board games like Word Building, Chess, Scramble etc, parents should instil the essential four virtues i.e., Intelligence, Memory, Reflex Action and Concentration and build up their passion for wisdom.

A student's wisdom depends on analysing different permutations and combinations and their various solutions to the problem, and putting across the final answer in the simplest way.

There was this question in Physics at the University of Copenhagen. 'How do you determine the height of a skyscraper using a barometer?' A student replied, "Tie a string and lower it. The length of the string is the height of the building".

The exceedingly inventive and simple answer irritated the examiner and he failed the student. In an appeal, the arbiter judged that the answer was indeed correct, but wanted the student to give another alternative with the 'basic principles of physics'. He was given five minutes time. The student was in deep thought. On being reminded that the time is running out, the student said he could not select from a bunch of extremely relevant answers, of course all based on 'physics'.

While asked to hurry up he said, "Drop the barometer from the top and measure the time. The height of the building can then be worked out from the formula $H = 0.5g$

multiplied by 't' squared" he continued, "Or you can swing the barometer first at the ground and then on the roof. The height is worked out by the difference in the gravitational restoring force T=2 pi sq root (1/g)"

To the stunned examiner the student further explained, "Or if the skyscraper has a staircase, it would be easier to mark the height of the skyscraper in barometer lengths and then add them up. If the sun is shining, calculate the shadows of the both the barometer and the skyscraper and it's a simple proportional arithmetic computation."

And the student finally said, "If you want the orthodox answer, measure the air pressure with the barometer at the roof and at the ground level and convert the difference in Milli-bars into feet to arrive at the height of the building".

The student was Niels Bohr, the first scientist from Denmark to win the Nobel Prize for Physics.

The above analysis has every thing a student should possess: An excellent and spontaneous reflex action based on cleverness and ability to recall relevant knowledge. These virtues can be acquired only by concentration, which in turn develops through enthusiasm.

***

INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence is different from skill
Skill is successfully walking a tightrope

Over Niagara Falls
Intelligence is not trying...!

When skill is mixed with intelligence, it is called wisdom. Skilled people solve problems. People with wisdom prevent them.

Intelligence is the ability to acquire, retrieve it and use the knowledge in a meaningful way to understand concrete and abstract ideas and to comprehend the unseen relationships among those objects and the ideas. Intelligence is normally associated with mathematics, science and logic. Intelligence is bound by three fundamental constructs.

1. Recognising the correct path to reach the target (answer).

2. Detecting the mistakes if any, and rectifying them in the process.

3. Completing the job within the minimum timeframe.

Suppose a fan failed. A person's shrewdness depends on analysing: Whether the problem is with the power connection to the fan or mechanism of the fan... Inspecting the electric installation or repairing the fan... And more basically to verify whether it is a power failure.

If he opens the fan without ascertaining the fact of power failure or faulty power cord or loose contact, plug system, he is not smart. Intelligence is normally associated with mathematics, science and logic.

Mathematical: A and B have 5 and 3 chapattis each. C shared those chapattis with them. All ate equally. C paid 8 rupees as his share. How much A and B should get among them? (For the solution see at the end of the book. Answer no. 42)

Science: 3 boys loved the princess. The king wanted to test them. He asked them. "I take all of you to my guest house in the middle of the forest. We start here in the morning and by the time we reach it would be afternoon. We travel by horses. You are blind folded. Each one is tested once. There are 7 doors to the bungalow. Except one, that is black, all are white. We go in. There are 7 horses. Except one, all are white. We enter the dining hall. The 6 plates are covered with black clothes and one with white. If you were asked to find out the odd one, which test do you take? Doors or horses or plates?" (Answer No. 43 at the end)

Linguistic: If man is first a boy, woman is a girl, what is a dog? (Answer no. 44 at the end)

General: You have only two jugs of 5 litres and 3 litres. You want to take exactly 4 litres of water from a pond. How do you do it? (Answer No. 45 at the end of the book)

Without searching for immediate answer, work on your own. If you cannot derive, then ask your parents and friends. Discuss with them. This is how you have to interact with others to develop your I.Q.

Intelligence can be defined as 'the capability to reach the correct target faster than others'. It results from general mental capability that involves the ability to analyse the problem, visualise the reason, think abstractly, comprehend ideas and learn to plan to derive the solution.

Basics: The intelligence of a student is recognized by his performance in Science and Mathematics. For any solution to a problem, intelligence contemplates three basic aspects, Sketch, Foundation and Construction. This is called structuring. Without a base there is no structure. Students who forget the basics or who could not understand the fundamentals (of science and mathematics) at the initial stages of their education would feel it difficult to associate with the subjects at a higher level. For example, when a student is asked to prove that the total of angles in a triangle is 180 degrees, the student should be able to imagine the following figure.

Unfortunately when I pose the above question, the mathematics students say they know the final answer but do not remember how to arrive at it. May be this is a simple question to test their knowledge, but these are the basics that one should be able to remember a lifetime. When a student forgets simple principles, he is bound to make mistakes. For example, 'What is 2 +2 +2 divided by 2?' Many would answer 'three'. But 'division' should be worked out first. Two by two is 'one'. Hence the answer is 'Five'.

Some people believe that intelligence is genetic. May be it's correct only in very few cases, that too only in the initial stages of childhood. One need not feel sorry for having not born into a family of scholars.

Intelligence does not develop all by itself along with age, unless it is nurtured with care and conscientiousness. That's why certain children who are bright in their early

stages fail to score good marks at a higher level.

Parents complain that their child is very intelligent and used to get good marks till recently but suddenly his performance is tumbling down. The reason is lack of intake, otherwise called acquired knowledge. When there is no increase in the acquired intelligence, it reflects on the rankings of the student.

Suppose if the kid scored seventy percent in his seventh standard and twenty percent in eighth standard, it means that the basic skills and fluid intelligence level of the child were adequate enough, exactly up to the previous standard. He did not 'add up' anything further to enhance his aptitude and brainpower.

Types of intelligence: There are many types of intelligence but they can be broadly classified into two.

Fluid Intelligence: A student learns alphabets at his kindergarten school. His knowledge is zero before joining the school. The acquired knowledge is a plus. The time he takes to acquire the knowledge is his 'fluid intelligence'.

It is the capacity to understand a new concept and its fundamentals quickly. It is also the ability to grasp, passion to innovate things and enthusiasm to gain wisdom. It is like learning the game of chess rapidly. It is much more necessary at the time of schooling or while joining a new profession. The more the Fluid intelligence, the fast the 'Net Knowledge' is. As said earlier, net knowledge is otherwise called T-Y [Today – Yesterday] i.e. knowledge that you acquire during the day.

Crystallized intelligence: Knowledge is different from intelligence. Once you acquire knowledge with your fluid intelligence, you should be able to apply it in your life. Otherwise you are called 'a learned person' (Panditha) rather than 'an intellect' (Gnaani).

Wisdom is the application of acquired knowledge in day-to-day life. Application of acquired knowledge in your profession is called 'Academic intelligence'. This again can be divided further into three parts: 1. Intra personal. 2. Inter personal and 3. Emotional.

1. 'Intra' means 'within'. Take an example of a scientist. To invent something new, he has to work within himself alone, using his basic fluid brainpower, acquired knowledge and common sense. This aptitude is called 'intra personal intelligence'. A

student preparing for the exams also needs it (Working out alone).

2. 'Interpersonal intelligence' deals with communication skills, diplomacy, logic and marketing one's own talent. It includes the art of private and public speaking, listening and building a brand image.

3. 'Emotional intelligence' is the wisdom and composure with which one works on his job under difficult, unexpected and demanding situations. How you react when you loose your passport on a foreign soil depends on your emotional intelligence.

Stupidity is antonym to intellect. 'Stupidity' is doing the illogical and irrational things and expecting a different outcome. Same way, being clever is different from being skilful. The best gag I have read these days on stupidity is this: "I'm not a complete stupid; some parts of me are missing."

Marks and Intelligence: Marks are not the criteria for assessing a child's intelligence, at least in the initial stages of education. An intelligent child may not get good marks because of his lack of industry. Similarly, a child who gets good marks may not be intelligent, but industrious.

These factors are proper, only in the initial stages of schooling. At a later stage, intelligence vis-à-vis memory (and industry) play a more vital role. Though scientifically not accurate, we can draw an equation like this. Let us symbolise a student's intelligence with 'x' and industry and memory with 'y'. A student with 60x + 40y will be good at Engineering, Accounts, Costing etc. A student with 40x + 60y will be bright in Medicine, Literature, History and Zoology etc.

In earlier days, parents used to bring up children in Gurukula. The students were to severe the Guru, and the Master, after watching the child for sometime, decided the area in which he would shine and then groom accordingly. It was contrary to our present practice where the parents decide the future course of the child depending on the demand without taking into consideration, their interests and skills.

My mother insisted that one of our family members should become a doctor. I was very good in mathematics and physics, but average in botany and zoology. I was forced to take up science group and reluctantly I studied. In spite of hard work I got 2 marks less for a seat in medicine. In those days there were no entrance tests. Basing on the pre-university marks in biological sciences the students were

admitted. Instead of choosing dental course or agriculture, I opted again for commerce (which requires mathematical intelligence). I stood college first in P.R. College, Kakinada and then scored more than eighty percent in Costing and Accounts in my C.A. I want to shed light on two points here: 1. Intelligence and memory are different. I may dare to say that the more intelligent you are, you are less memory oriented and vice versa, of course subject to exceptions. 2. If a student takes up a course reluctantly against his interest/capacity, the chances are more for his failure, in spite of his hard work. And every parent should know it.

Facts about intelligence: Intelligence never grows in classrooms. It develops out side, particularly at home. Every parent need not be a psychologist to counsel the child. To build up intelligence in a child, intelligent concern is required, a concern with affection, responsibility and guidance.

A person may be unintelligent in his student days and develop later by hard work, persuasion and strong will. A bank chairman said: "As a student, I didn't perform well on standardised tests. In fact, I was a mediocre student. Intellectually superior students found great joy in taunting me. Even my teachers were predisposed. I actually started to believe their sentiments. It would have been so easy to give up, but I didn't. As an adult, I am proud of my accomplishments. My career has advanced handsomely as I've climbed to the very top of the famed corporate ladder. I'm no longer insulted, but consulted. I just wonder how many children today face the same tribulations".

Education psychologist, Dr. Robert Steinberg, introduced theory of "Successful Intelligence." According to him, a concerted effort must be made to help all students develop the four skills: 1. Analytical 2. Creative 3. Practical 4. Balanced.

These four skills are self-explanatory. Intelligence requires 'understanding' the subject first. Analysis is the basis for understanding. After analysing, one should create own techniques and innovations to add to it. If a student simply writes what he is taught in his classroom, he is prone to face difficulties at a later stage of his education.

Eight types of aptitudes: A student should assess himself carefully to find out the field in which he is likely to prosper most. When ability exceeds ambition, or ambition exceeds ability, the likelihood of success is limited. As said earlier, the student or the parent should not be attracted by a glamorous goal, without assessing

one's capacities. Opting for engineering without basic mathematical intelligence, choosing general medicine with lack of memory power are examples. There are eight types of intelligence. A student may possess some of the below virtues as a combination, but in different ratios. He can identify them before deciding his future.

1. Verbal-Linguistic (word smart): These learners have highly developed auditory skills and are generally elegant speakers. They think in words rather than pictures. Their skills include: listening, speaking, writing, story telling, explaining, teaching, understanding the syntax and remembering information, convincing someone of their point of view, analysing language usage. Possible career interests: Poet, journalist, writer, teacher, lawyer, politician and translator.

2. Logical-Mathematical (logic smart): These learners think conceptually in logical and numerical patterns. Always being curious about the world around them, these learners ask lots of questions and like to do experiments. Their skills include: problem solving, classifying the facts, categorising the information, logical questioning, wondering about natural events, performing complex mathematical calculations, working with geometric shapes. Possible career paths: Scientists, engineers, computer programmers, researchers, accountants and mathematicians.

3. Visual-Spatial (picture smart): This intelligence includes ability to perceive the visual. People with this skill enjoy looking at maps, charts, pictures, videos, and movies. Their talents include reading, writing, understanding charts and graphs, a good sense of direction, sketching, painting, creating visual metaphors and analogies (perhaps through the visual arts), manipulating images, constructing, fixing, designing practical objects, interpreting visual images. Possible career interests: Navigators, sculptors, visual artists, inventors, architects, interior designers, mechanics, and engineers.

4. Musical/Rhythmic Intelligence (Sound smart): Ability to produce and appreciate music. These musically inclined learners think in sounds, rhythms and patterns. Their skills include: singing, playing musical instruments, composing music, and remembering melodies. Possible career paths: Musician, Disc Jockey, Singer and Composer.

5. Bodily Kinaesthetic (Body smart): Enjoys dancing and sports activities, well-coordinated movements and learns from hands-on activities. Possible Career Paths: Acting and Surgery.

6. Naturalist (Nature smart): Cares for animals and plants. Is good at sorting and classifying. Understands natural phenomena. Possible Career Paths: Horticulture, forestry etc.

7. Interpersonal (People smart): Ability to relate and understand others. These learners try to see things from other people's point of view in order to understand how they think and feel. They are great organisers. Their skills include: listening, using empathy, under-standing other people's moods and feelings, counselling, co-operating with groups, peaceful conflict resolution, establishing positive relations with other people. Possible Career Paths: Counsellor, salesperson, politician, businessperson etc.

8. Intra personal (Self smart): Knows himself well. Formulates opinions and beliefs. These people are intelligent in recognising the strengths and weaknesses, reflecting and analysing, aware of inner feelings, desires and dreams. They are capable of evaluating thinking patterns, reasoning. They understand their role in relationship to others. Like to spend time alone. Possible career paths: Medicine, Writing profession, Philosophy and Research.

Facets of all these eight spheres may be present in every individual. Every person reflects some or all of these eight spheres. Composition of these facets may vary from one individual to another. But let us safely presume that every one reflects them all. One should know his/her own abilities and interests.

Unfortunately sometimes we may not get a job we are interested in. We may have to forego our hobby and land up in a disgusting job for livelihood. An excellent musician or a painter may have to start his profession as a clerk. That's how the road to success is dotted with many tempting parking places. But one need not think that it is the end of the road.

If one is unable to settle down in a field of his own interest, he can still continue with his hobby and be motivated by it. He can bring more enthusiasm into his job, drawing inspiration from his hobby. Certainly a day would come when he can make his hobby, his main occupation.

My interest was literature. I know it cannot feed me. I completed my Chartered Accountancy, joined a bank and meanwhile developed the skill of professional writing. Then I resigned my job. In the same fashion, if your interesting hobby is un-

remunerative, don't jump into it immediately. Wait. Drawing inspiration from your hobby, find a financially rewarding occupation. Meanwhile acquire professional skills in your hobby. I would like to give this suggestion particularly to those students who dream of becoming actors, directors and storywriters. Opportunity may knock your door only once, but temptation leans on the doorbell. Don't get tempted. Wait for the opportunity.

"The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts working the moment you get up in the morning and does not stop until you get into your study" said a philosopher.

Intelligence is not to make no mistakes, but quickly to see how to make them good.

Concentration and mental toughness are the margins of victory.

Train the Brain:

Brain is like a still pond. Unless you continuously pour knowledge and wisdom and keep it active, it dries up. One has to update his skills endlessly. Age is no bar. More importantly, you have to keep the brain away from virus. Unnecessary things, when remembered, become mental garbage and that turns out to be the virus.

Members in the interview panels do not have computers to judge your intelligence, memory and knowledge. You have to speak. You need to be spontaneous. To be spontaneous you have to train the brain. Sharpen it at every available opportunity.

When you are in the college bus, ask your friend to note down on a piece of paper, the colours of the first ten cars that pass by you. Repeat them in the same sequence to your friend. While on a tour, you can gamble with your family members to find out which side is Bay of Bengal or Vivekananda Rock.

Try to remember certain interesting things like: The most common name in the world is Mohammed... The strongest muscle in the body is tongue... We share our birthday with nine million other people in the world... 'I am' is the shortest complete sentence... or 'Do' can also be a simple sentence... In our country, if the entire population walked past a pillar in single line the line would never... never... never end because of the rate of reproduction.

Like any other organ, human brain also needs regular exercise to stay healthy. There are four areas of skills to develop your mental activity:

1. Language skills: Initiate talking with friends in simple English. Let others smile at your grammatical mistakes and fumbling for the appropriate words when you begin. Then you will be surprised to find your in-built ability to articulate your expressions freely and assertively. Remember the famous words of Alvin Toffler, writer of the book, Future Shock. "Even if you do learn to speak excellent and correct English, whom are you going to speak it to?" Practice the following procedure:

Try to write down in twenty sentences, the story of the latest film that you watched.

Start with simple sentences. Read it after two days. There are eighty percent chances of your not being very happy with it. Don't stop. Try again till it satisfies you.

After practicing and when you are convinced with the results, read some portions of your lesson. When you are confident that you have fully understood the contents of the lesson, sit alone and try to record on a Dictaphone the summary of your lesson in your own words (without seeing the book). Listen to it. This is the most crucial step in the entire exercise. If you pass this test, rest assured success is yours.

Work on a computer. Try to replace the words with the help of language thesaurus (tools). Try to improve on it till you are totally convinced. Your ability to choose the expressions from the glossary of words will improve your talent as a communicator.

2. Numerical skills: If you consider that mental arithmetic is something that you can happily leave behind as you can afford a calculator nowadays, you are thoroughly mistaken. Students who complain difficulty with subjects like Physics, Management Accountancy and Statistics should know that the main reason behind the problem is lack of curiosity in fundamental mathematics. When you go next time to the supermarket, keep doing a mental arithmetic, of what your shopping is going to cost. Then check it with the bill.

3. Reasoning skills: It is unfortunate that our education system is exam oriented. A student memorises Archimedes principle, but may not be able to explain why a ship floats on water while the wooden log of the same weight sinks into it.

Share wisdom. Why pencils are not round shaped? Not because of the grip, but because six pencils can be made from the same quantity of wood, from which only five round shaped pencils can be manufactured. Why TV screens are concave while cinema screens are convex? The source of light is located differently.

Develop a critical way of thinking that keeps you away from fallacious reasoning and keeps you mentally alert. Never stop at the first answer that strikes your mind and never be satisfied with it. Look for the other possible answers.

Let us suppose there are ten crows and one is killed by a pistol with 'bang' sound. How many will remain? When you are given three options: a) zero b) one c) more than zero, normally many of choose 'a' as the correct answer. If you are intelligent, you opt for 'b', as you know that the dead crow would definitely be there. 'Zero' is certainly not the answer. If you are more rational in thinking, probe further and analyse. The parents of the dead-crow, in spite of the fear of another pistol shot, may prefer to stay by its side weeping. Some crows may be deaf and blind also. You don't want to leave anything to chance. Hence the correct reply is 'c', i.e., 'more than zero' that eventually includes the inevitable 'One'. This is reasonable thinking.

In the same fashion, if you toss one rupee coin 1000 times, it will not be heads 500 times but may be 480 times. Why? Because the picture 'head' weighs more, so it ends up on the bottom. It is the reason when captains go for 'toss'; they often call 'tail'. Studies show that if a cat falls off the 1st floor of a building, it may break two legs. But if it jumps from third floor it may not break any. Why? It supposedly takes about two floors for the cat to realise what is happening... to correct it's muscles.

Sharpening your analysis and practicing your logical skills are very essential, not only for group discussions, but also for your higher studies or jobs. You have to consider information from all areas of life and try to get your point across.

4. Creative Skills: Take paper and write down how many possible articles you would take with you, to climb Mount Everest. Compete with your friends making wild and wacky suggestions. For example you can suggest them whether they included Toothpaste and Brush.

Creativity is leaps of imagination. When asked to write why king Ashoka is considered great, a student may write: "Because he constructed roadside shelters and planted trees". Ok, but did he sow seeds? Plants? Or trees? A creative kid writes, "King Ashoka is one of those foremost emperors, who recognised the relationship between good transport system and commerce. As bullock carts were the only mode to transport in those days, he constructed wayside rest houses and developed trees and thus tried to build up economy of the country, which ruined after the Kalinga war".

Developing brainpower is not a product of schooling but of the life-long attempt. The more you acquire, you would be more willing to gain further. Remove the dust before your brains rust.

How do you take care of your vehicle? You never pollute its fuel with water. You drive carefully on a bumpy road. When your vehicle gets even a small dent you feel very sad. You protect your vehicle from dust with protective covers, because it costs thousands of rupees. Now here is the question. I will pay you a million. Will you sell yourself to me? No. You are more valuable to you than your vehicle. Have you recognised your worth? You can buy a new vehicle if it is spoiled. But nothing can replace your student life. Nothing. Never entertain polluted thoughts. Don't walk on bumpy roads. Protect your mind from dust. Let not your career be spoiled with dents.

IN BRIEF....

Intelligence is of two types. Developing and applying your knowledge and skill appropriately.

To develop intelligence, you should train your brain with four types of skills, Language, Numerical Ability, Reasoning and Creativity. Know your field of interest and develop your skills in that regard. Train the brain constantly to keep it active.

Try to locate strongholds of your intelligence spheres, so that you would shine better and work with enthusiasm.

MEMORY

Memory is
Holding onto the most important lessons
On one side,
And keeping the fragrances
You never want to loose on the other side.
But memory is also a crazy man
That collects coloured rags
And throws away... food.

The word 'Memory' originated from Greek Goddess Mnemosyne who was believed to remember everything from the past and present.

Suppose your organisation deputes you to win a contract from a foreign company. They ask you about your company's previous year's earnings. Imagine how dreadful it would be to say that you would look in the file and tell. Memory is directly proportionate to your interest on the subject. That is the reason why your memory skills are tested in interviews.

A candidate appearing for interview need not know who the grandfather of Gandhi is, but certainly should be able knowledgeable about contemporary events. The interviewer normally does not ask complicated questions about the subject in which the candidate is familiar with. He never questions a zoology postgraduate what a 'Homo sapiens' is, a chemistry student to explain what is C3H88O14N1460 and a physics student about Noble prize winning Fatty Acid Oxidization. But a postgraduate student in physics should be able to tell Newton's third law of motion, a chemistry graduate the benzene circle and a zoology student the difference between Protozoa and Chordates.

Types of memory: Memory is a phenomenon about which we know very little. We assume that memories are stored in the neurons of the hippocampus. It is of three types.

Iconic memory : It is a snapshot memory of what our senses perceive at any given instance. Most of the memories, like the colour of the car that just passed and the sequence of advertisement in a commercial break, come under this category. They are discarded as mental garbage within a few moments. The best example is your

birth number in a train. Till you enter into, you remember it and immediately throw it to your garbage space.

Short-term memory: It is a memory that is always 'currently' active. It is a kind of waiting room for events that may prove significant, such as what you had for lunch, the person you met last week, a telephone number and your syllabus. The brain selects whether to make it an iconic memory or long term memory. If the student is not interested in certain aspects (however important they may be), they are pushed out as iconic memory. This is how a person sometimes forgets essential things.

Long-term memory: Long-term memory stores 'facts' that have been reinforced (usually by repetition or emotional impact) and can last a lifetime. Sometimes, entirely unremarkable iconic images are also stored in a long-term memory forever. We all have these gatecrashers in our minds: A piece of conversation from childhood, fight with a co passenger while travelling, beating by our teacher, a moment of small experience, a few tunes of music heard once etc. They are very insignificant but never vanish.

Long-term memory again includes Semantic (remembering facts), Procedural (remembering skills) and Episodic (remembering events) memories.

Working memory can hold five (plus or minus one) pieces of separate information at a time. For example, you can remember five to six items of a shopping catalogue without a written list, or a telephone number with maximum six digits. It may reach to nine, depending on your holding capacity. If you want to hold more, then you have to recall it often. By repeating the matter again and again, it gets registered in your long-term memory. A memory, replayed for two years is consolidated and has a potential to stay for a lifetime. Continuous recollection of subject matter keeps the student mentally healthy. Normally students do not accomplish this practice and quite often forget what they learnt in their previous class (year). This is called 'Studying for exam syndrome'. In dealing with subjects like Mathematics, Advanced physics, where basics are a must, the syndrome leads to utter chaos.

Unusual scents from the past have power to evoke vivid personal memories to a great extent. The power of 'smell' is more than the eye to stir up past memories. Even for the eye, the remembering capacity for 'images' is more than the 'words'. That's why, whenever possible it is advisable to 'write' than study.

Some skills, like riding bicycles, typing on computer (once learnt) may stay intact though not practiced for a long time, but certain others like playing musical instruments, playing chess and speaking a foreign language (including English) quickly become rusty if they are not regularly practiced. Keeping in touch with your subject matter belongs to the second category. That is why it is advisable to study every day at least for an hour even during your summer vacations.

Why we forget: A child picks up a new word every 90 minutes, right through childhood and stores in memory. It works out to approximately 10 new words every day. This is highly remarkable, as this exercise does not stop at mere keeping in mind, but simultaneously analysing the language, working out on various combinations, subconsciously working out its grammar and making intuitive guesses about the exact meaning of words. This analysis is astonishing. No computer can replace it. The memory is like a muscle. The more you use it, the stronger its tone.

Experiments have shown that an average 18-year-old knows about 60,000 words and around 300 thousand bonds. A bond is a cluster of connected words. Your 'parent's names' is a bond. The road from your educational institute to your house is a bond. A bond is interconnected with words. Most people are familiar with 40 to 90 thousands spoken words including friends' names and events etc. A standard dictionary has around 70,000 words. A Chess expert stores more than 1,00,000 different patterns in his long-term memory along with what normal people store.

'Forgetting' is a common phenomenon. Instead of trying to remember everything, it is advisable to keep a dairy or a schedule paper.

A psychologist by name Bradley once shared his experience, "At my breakfast table one day, when I was reading the news paper, I saw my name in the engagements column. I am supposed to give a live talk show on Radio at eight o'clock in the morning. I have completely forgotten about it and I hurried. My subject on that day was 'How to remember".

Forgetting may be due to four reasons: Difficulty in Registration, Failure in Recalling, Mental Block and Memory Overload.

1. Loss of Registration: Some times, it is hard for our brain to record the 'basic information' sent by the various sensory organs all at the same time. One sensory organ dominates the other. Suppose a boy is totally absorbed in watching a film, his

eyes forward it through the electro magnetic pathways (E.M.Pws) to his cortex. His mom calls for breakfast. His ears also try to send the message to cortex. Acetylcholine is the neurotransmitter that controls his awareness. When eyes are dominantly controlling the attention, the message through his ears is not powerful enough to stimulate the mind. Only after two or three loud calls, he realises that his mother is shouting at him.

In other words, the E.M.Pws, which are hitherto carrying the film from eyes to his pleasure points, are reluctant to carry the mother's call from his ears to the Cortex (brain).

It acts other way round also. When he is studying his most 'disgusting' subject, his eyes simply 'watch' the lesson but the E.M.Pws refuse to take it to the brain. At this stage, smell of fried rice from the kitchen or a song from the drawing room is enough to disturb him. When there is no registration, forgetting is inevitable.

2. Failure in Recalling : A student is fairly sure that a piece of information is stored in his memory, but is not able to reach to it. It happens particularly when it is required at the most important situations. It may be due to Lack of Recalling, otherwise called 'memory decay'. When a matter is not recalled for a long time, it decays.

The more you recall, the better the memory. People remember the names of movies and heroes for a longer period as they discuss with friends and recall them at bedtime.

3. Mental block: The word 'lethogica' describes the state of not being able to remember the word we want. The most disturbing form of memory failure is a 'mental block'. It can strike at any time. When we want to recollect a past incident or a song in the night, suddenly a black cloud engulfs and we cannot recall it in spite of great effort. In mid-conversation, we forget the previous topic or an incident that we were discussing and draw a blank. Above all, in the middle of an exam or interview, memory failure is disastrous.

The most important cause for mental blocks is tension. The hormone "Cortisol" is secreted by the adrenal glands in response to any kind of physical or psychological stress. Researchers gave high doses of cortisol to students four days before a test and found that it reduced their memory to a large extent, only to return to normal state after two weeks.

"Attention...Memory...Tensions" are mutually dependent on one other. It is like a cycle. A student who is not sure of his success undergoes tension before his exams and his glucose levels are disturbed. To balance the glucose energies, brain triggers cortisol, which in turn kills memory cells.

With the fear of facing an exam and under the influence of stress, your memory loss gets worse. In high-pressure situations such as a job interviews or while writing an exam, keep your cool. Keep smiling. Never be in a hurry to start answering. Your trembling fingers, rubbing of hands and hypertension amplify your mental blocks further.

Every experience leaves a trace. Brain is such an excellent computer that it is highly selective, producing edited highlights rather than a complete recorded version of the event.

The detail and the length of the experience (as a memory) that you want to store depends on the quantum of the space you are willing to allow your brain to hold. This again depends on the intensity of the experience. Inquisitiveness and memory have a direct link. Excitement makes experience more memorable.

4. Memory overload: There is radical change in our life style compared to thirty years ago. Earlier people were more at leisure, discussing a lot less number of things. Nowadays a person unconsciously remembers many things, from technology to politics, music albums and movies.

Every day we add up some interesting thing to our memory, not necessarily important. It leads to 'memory overload'. Due to overload, memory inevitably decays.

The art of forgetting: Forgetting is a boon and a curse. It is a curse in the sense that memory is a basic requirement for a human being. Forgetting is a boon because if we do not forget anything through out our life, we would go mad.

Forgetting is also an art in the sense that it is highly difficult to forget unwanted matter to create 'space' for the important things. But there are ways. For example when we listen a tune or jingle in the morning, sometimes it gets stuck and replays in our mind continuously throughout the day. To overwrite it, hum another tune for a few minutes till the previous one dies. Similarly, if yesterday's movie is haunting

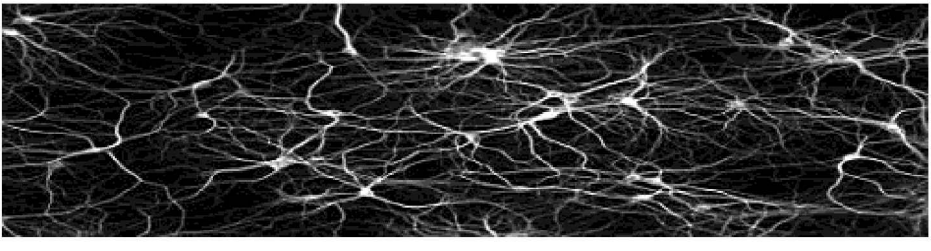
you, to put it behind, play a cerebral game like chess for ten minutes before you start your daily studies. Learn to forget. It is a skill worth learning.

"Our child reads well, but forgets. He suffers from lack of memory" is the normal complaint most of the parents make about their children. Forgetting and Lack of memory are different. Unless you are suffering with Alzheimer's disease, you cannot say that you have insufficient memory. Students who claim that they suffer from lack of memory quite often remember the story line of a movie that they had seen ten years ago.

Ask the child some simple questions: who is Harry Potter? From which film is the song: Every night in my dreams? Quick and prompt is the answer. He remembers the Valentine's Day, but not Mother's day. Why? To know the reason, we should understand the 'Permanent Bond Theory' of Neurons.

The Neuron system: It is not true that intelligent people do remember everything. There is no relationship between intelligence and memory. In fact great scientists have poor memory. But it requires more explanation. Great people remember their subject more than their daily routine aspects. May be this is the reason why the term 'Absent-minded professor' became popular.

The difference between a normal brain and Einstein's brain is that the latter holds bonds that are useful to his profession permanently. It does not mean that Einstein never forgets. But he knows what he should remember. For many students it is the other way around. They remember all unnecessary stuff at the cost of important material.



The concept of neuron bonds requires detailed explanation. There are more than 1.000.000.000 neurons in our brain. Every time a child acquaints with a new concept, a 'firing' takes place among some neurons. It is called a Bond. The more often this firing is, the stronger the bond is. This is called punascharana (Recapitulating).

The entire activity in the nervous system relies on neurons, which are connected by nerve fibres called 's'. A single axon neuron can receive information from 100,000 other axons.

A neuron distinguishes between stimuli and controls its reaction, either to react or ignore. If it were to react, it is called 'firing'. When it fires, (depending on the reaction) it releases certain types of molecules called 'neurotransmitters'. These chemical messengers transmit signals across the other neurons, and almost decide total body functioning. For example, people with more anxiety and tension eat more. This is because of the low level of Serotonin, which triggers over-eating. Same way, capsaicin, the chemical in chillies and peppers that makes them taste hot, interferes with the nerves (endorphins) those that send 'feeling full' messages to the brain. So if you want to loose weight, keep away from the excessive chillies.

The bond concept: When you ask a child his/her name, the electro magnetic pathway, travelling through the ear, activates the single neuron (O) that is holding the name. She/he tells us by activating the muscles of the tongue.

"What is your parent's name?" For your single question, the pathway divides into two and activates two neurons, holding the respective names. It is called single line bond (O) – (O) activation.

In an examination, while answering a question, "What is the formula for water?" the eye passes the message to the brain and it in turn activates a bond consisting of three neurons. The 'hand' (which is called Karmendriya in Sanskrit) writes the answer... $2H2 + O2 = 2H2O$. This is triangle (Δ) bond.

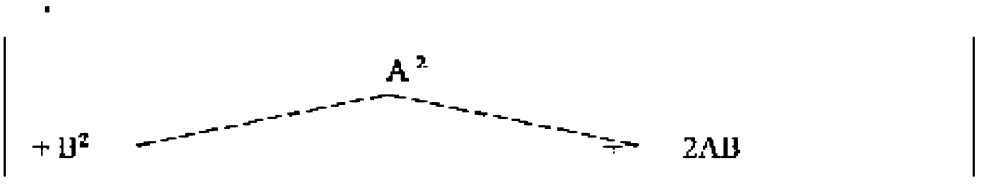
To remember the sons of Dasaradha (4) and names of Pandavas (5), the brain stimulates a square bond and a pentagon bond respectively. A normal person can hold a bond of five neurons and not more than that. Suppose I tell you my phone number 9246502662, you would remember it like 92465 as one bond and 02662 as second bond.

Now you know that a pentagon bond has 5 neurons. If we add one more neuron to it, it usually splits into two triangle bonds of three each. The triangle bonds are eager to attract two more neurons to become pentagon bonds at the earliest. The splitting and adding is a continuous process in our brain. In a haste to become a pentagon bond, the triangle bond invites unnecessary viruses. If this virus is aggressively

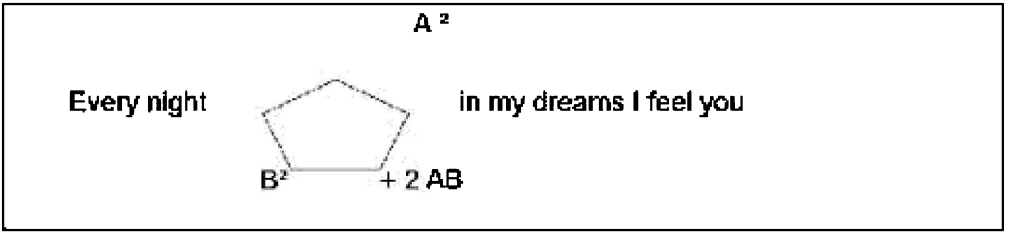
active, it dominates the entire bond. And it may even cause the lapse of memory of the original important portion too. And that is called 'Forgetting'.

Then how to eliminate it and improve the memory? Before discussing the remedies, let us further understand this phenomenon with the following example:

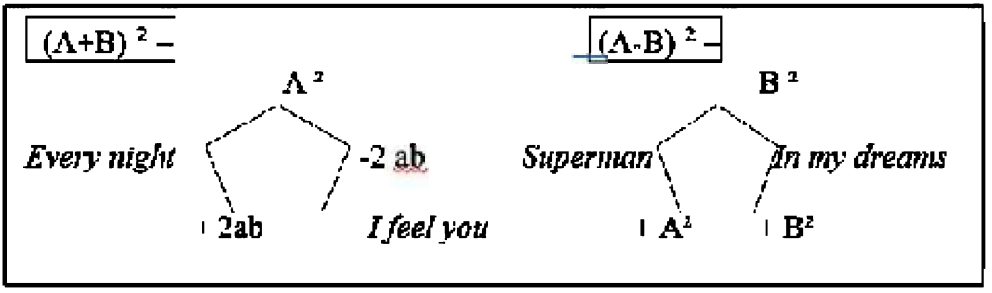
Suppose a student is engaged in studying (A+B) 2 formula. A triangular bond takes place in his brain as under.



Then while having dinner if he watches the Titanic movie; unknowingly the triangle bond shapes into a pentagon bond as under:



And then suppose he studied (A-B)2 next. The formula, A2 + B2 – 2AB registers in his brain. And if he had a chat with his brother about superman for another fifteen minutes before sleep, then the (total) ten bonds fizzle out and split into two different pentagon bonds as under.



When I ask the students about the Archimedes formula, this is the reason why even engineering graduates say they vaguely remember it as 'If some article is put in water err...sorry...liquid ...something happens...which is equal ... to the weight of something...'

Hope the reason is clear to you now. Some neurons stay in tact, but certain bonds fizzle out, making the memory 'Vague'. The following are a few tips that would help arrest mental decay.

1. You can talk, chat or watch TV but complete everything before you begin your studies and never watch TV during or in between or afterwards.

2. Go to bed immediately, without talking or watching TV., not even for ten minutes after completion of your studies.

3. When you plan to see a favourite programme on TV, or plan a movie after your studies, you can never concentrate on your study because you are unconsciously looking forward to the event.

4. Never gossip either in person or on phone at bedtime. Close your eyes and recollect what you read / taught during the day. The electro - magnetic pathways are comparatively still and passive during your sleep and this would help the bonds grow stronger.

If you really concentrate on your subject, it is enough if you study for two hours a day and recall it once in the night. Clean the mental virus regularly. Mind has to get rid of unnecessary memory overload by cleaning it up every day. The mental exercise, called '5-D technique' (to be done for few minutes in the night) is discussed

later in this book. To reduce the memory overload, particularly during examinations, you should follow the technique of 'key noting'. Key–nothing means, reducing the entire subject into small words, remembering them in sequential order and then creating back the entire subject. This process increases your storage space.

IN BRIEF....

- **To develop memory, one has to eliminate the garbage from the brain and reduce the overload. Minimise your talking, particularly arguments and gossiping.**
- **Tension accelerates memory decay. Understand the neuron bond theory.**
- **Develop the 'keynote concept' to create more brain-space.**

REFLEX ACTION

You may be astonishingly intelligent
And your memory may have been
Remarkably good,
But what is the use
If you can neither reveal
Nor express it?

It is unfortunate that neither school, nor college teaches communication skills, in thinking, speaking and creative writing. Reflex action means:

1. Understanding the requirement or question of the other person in the right perspective.

2. Picking the answer from your intelligence and memory bank quickly.

3. Responding in such a way that others can understand you properly.

In the good old days, grand parents in joint families used to tell bedtime stories to the children. Kids used to discuss with their grandparents, argue with them and get their doubts clarified however silly they might be. It's the age of computer now. Computers supply knowledge. They cannot verbally and intelligently communicate. They cannot refurbish our logic. They have no original reflexes. A computer cannot tell us how to cut a cake into eight pieces with just three cuts, unless we feed the information into it. But we can. And that is the 'original' reflex action and the difference between what a computer can and cannot do.

Quick reflex action plays vital role in day-to-day life and is a 'must' for a student in his viva, interview and later in his job. As a representative of your organisation, if you go to foreign land, you should be able to understand them in their true sense and explain in such a way that they understand you. It includes your language, punctuation, expression and precision.

In our personality development classes, we encourage students to talk. Whether they are right or wrong, we cheer them to stand up and give answers. Unfortunately the students, particularly from semi-urban and rural backgrounds, though they know the answers, fail to rise up and speak.

When we conduct SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats), many of them tell that lack of communicating ability is their second weakness, first being lack of concentration. Slow reflex actions are a problem for students worldwide. Surprisingly, fear of death stands in the list at thirteen.

Understanding others: Understanding others while they talk is the first part of Reflex action. Some times the speech and reflex actions of your lecturer may be confusing to you. Most lecturers might have devoted many years of research relating to the subjects they teach. But, being an expert on a subject does not ensure that one can teach it to others effectively.

Each of us can think of a professor we knew, who had great mind, but was a miserable teacher. Knowledge is the foundation of effective lecturing, but other preparatory steps are also essential. The qualities of a bad lecturer are that they try to cover up too much material in too short a time. They teach very fast to complete the subject. Sometimes they are not well prepared and sometimes their speech is disorganized. They are overconfident about their students' ability to understand their lecture and thus never give the student an opportunity to raise any doubt. This habit is called 'cover the syllabus syndrome'.

While understanding others is the first part of reflex action, speaking in such a way to make others understand you... is the next part. It includes public speaking also.

Fear of public speaking: It happened in 1988 if I remember it right; I gave my first public speech. It was in Madras, Adyar open Beach, where the producers of my film "Rakchasudu" celebrated its hero's birthday. They were bestowing the title 'Megastar' on the hero. The sounds of ascending sea waves on one side, and the

shouts of about twenty thousand audience on the other side made me shiver in my pants. The sweat ran down my cheeks. I was about to faint. I wanted to say, 'Megastar' but in my tension I said, "Happy birthday to 'Rakchasudu". There were jeers. That's it. I got down from the stage. My speech did not last more than a minute.

Speaking in public becomes a nightmare due to two reasons. The first is the psychological terror situation to face the crowds. Second is fear of becoming a laughing stock. Nobody in the auditorium looks good to you with their serious faces hiding their mischievous smiles. You know that they are ready to blow you out at your smallest fault, shilly-shally pause, stammering or hesitation.

But look at the audiences' point of view. There are many agonising reasons for them too. Your speech may be dull, boring and confusing. You do not appear to be having any strong convictions about the subject that you are talking about. But they are enthusiastic. Otherwise they would not have been sitting there. They are ready either to applaud or criticise. The ball is in your court.

Initially everybody gets nervous to some extent. The fear would be so bad that a lump in the throat would physically prevent you from speaking. But keep quite. Except you, nobody knows about it. If you are sensitive to your weakness, you can never continue your speech any further. Believe that the other great orators also began like you.

On the other hand, know that you cannot dupe the audience. Your topic and your oration certainly should be relevant, true and authentic. Some times the audience start clapping. You should be able to understand whether it is for your great speech or are they asking you to quit! I have found some eminent people trying to pour out their entire knowledge when the occasion does not merit it. They sincerely believe that the claps are for applause.

Self-therapy: The best way to develop the art of public speaking (or group discussion) is self-therapy that includes the following:

1. First prepare the core of your subject matter, develop it and be confident of it. This is called the nucleus of your speech.

2. Decide on the time. How much time you would like to speak? In the initial

stages, better make it short and sweet.

3. Write down your speech and learn it by heart. Note down the time.

4. Record it on a tape recorder, without looking into the notes. Listen to it after two days. You may not have liked so many points in it... your diction, subject matter, gaps, modulation and stammer. Don't worry. Repeat the exercise till you are satisfied.

5. Stand before a mirror and correct your body language and hand position.

6. Deliver a small speech before a group of your known true friends. Let them sit before you as if they are in an auditorium. Before attempting this, you should be thorough with the subject. Let your friends suggest about your body language etc.

Continue to practice this till you are confident. After the practice and when you are confident, go to the arena.

As the time of your speech approaches, even minutes before the event, rehearse within yourself, so that you continue to listen to your inner voice. Even while speaking, let your mental awareness guide you and you would soon find your energies welling up inside you.

How to start a speech: "After twenty years of marriage, my wife wanted me to take another woman out to dinner. She said she loves me, but the other woman also equally loves to spend some time with me. The other woman that my wife was referring to was 'my mother', who has been a widow for 19 years, but the demands of my work had made it not possible to visit her often..." the speaker, speaking on Mother's day, stopped for a while and by that time the entire auditorium was silent, enthusiastic and emotional.

The techniques of public speaking mainly include how you start it. Start with an emotional statement, quotation or a joke. Sometimes a shocking revelation like "In next two decades, fifty percent of our population is going to suffer either from heart problem or renal failures...! Yes. I am talking about our irregular food habits..." may be appropriate. How quickly you take the listeners into your hold is important.

Some speakers address all members on the dais, each by name and their designation, testing the patience of the audience.

Many books suggest about relaxation before a public speaking, as it is the only key to effective talking. No. Speaking before the audience always implies a certain amount of effort and tension but it is certainly not rapid heartbeat or perspiration. For a skilled orator it is the enthusiastic excitement to deliver the goods. On the other hand, major cause of anxiety for a beginner is due to either lack of 'speech construction' or awareness of subject knowledge.

As you raise your head to initiate your speech, you find all the faces looking back at you with great expectations (or some of your friends mischievously smiling). You are the leader of the situation and the job is new to you. There is no other choice except to continue. It certainly instigates a wave of nervousness. Your confidence comprises of your body language, gestures and tone.

There are two types of discernments in delivering a speech, Hitham and Priyam. The former includes preaching of values, morals, personality development etc., and Priyam is the talk that entertains the listeners with jokes, light-hearted stories and funny experiences. The success of a speech depends on the judicious mix of both. The presenter should know when to be serious or humorous, depending on the purpose of his speech and the mood of the audience.

Take few seconds to adjust your body and mind. Let the audience wait with expectation. If you begin to talk immediately, you may find yourself losing control. You get ahead of your thoughts, which may lead to a total catastrophe. But never prolong 'your' silence.

Never continuously look only at the front row or corner of the auditorium and deliver your speech. Watch the auditorium from one corner to other and from front to back. The listeners should feel that you are looking at them. The feeling gives them a sense of belongingness. On the other hand you may find certain viewers with gloomy facial expressions. Some may be talking in cell phones or with neighbours or even sleeping. Don't get disappointed. They are called infectors. Forget them.

In contrast, some will be assuring. To come out of your nervousness, find those enthusiastic faces, their smiles and the assuring nods. Draw confidence from them.

Smart talk: Here are some tips for smart talk:

1. Stand erect. Never stand on one leg.

2. Never go for a vast subject. Concentrate on a limited number of interesting things.

3. Don't stammer. You stammer when you are not confident.

4. Long sentences are harder to understand.

5. Avoid distractions like scratching and picking the nose etc.

6. Know when to take a breath in between your conversations. See the following two sentences for example. 'Woman, without her man, is nothing...!' 'Woman! Without her, man is nothing...!'

7. Don't talk in a monotone. You are not a radio announcer. Vary your voice according to the mood and subject. A Valentine's Day speech should be different from the Revolution Day speech.

8. Be careful of your diction. Get your pronunciation right. Don't mumble or slur your words.

9. Be aware of people looking at your facial expressions. Get their attention. Use your hands, gestures and smile when required.

10. Never talk too fast. Know where to pause to give the audience time to smile or applaud. If you select a joke, it should be brief and sharp with a definite understandable punch line at the end.

Group discussions:

Some organisations select their candidates after scrutinizing them from a group discussion. These discussions include presenting your point, discussing, listening and arguing and convincing or getting convinced.

Vocabulary is one of the simplest and the most effective ways to keep you mentally alert and it is something that others will notice as a sign of your skilful communication. It is called 'Verbal I.Q.' and is most important these days. Add some dynamism while you address. There are certain winning words like, 'Let's talk on this subject in detail when we revert back to, and now go over to more important aspect of my topic...' These are the phrases that tranquillise the listeners.

Phrases such as, 'I guess and I am not sure...' 'You may not understand what I am talking but...' are to be avoided

Presenting your point is an art. But not a difficult one, once you understand the technique. To present your point, have a clearly defined theme first. As said earlier, it is called nucleus. Add flavour to it. Arouse interest in the subject to the co-participants and observers. Arrange the facts and ideas in an effective and systematic form. Make it understandable and convincing. At the end summarise the whole thing. At group discussions students sometimes complain, "We don't know how to handle the discussion that follows our presentation". To handle this situation, you have to establish a two-way communication. Invite participation. Be the leader for your speech and be a good audience when others talk.

Discussions and criticism : When you want to comment, don't do it from a hiding. Stand up and put forth your comment. But there are ways to offer effective criticism.

1. Know why you need to criticise.

2. Weigh the consequences before your comment.

3. Choose the right place and time. Substantiate with positive and negative examples.

4. Ease into the criticism and know when to withdraw from the argument.

5. Know that when two clever people are arguing over two opposing principles, both are right.

6. Be willing to compromise if necessary.

7. Give explanations rather than excuses.

8. Other's ideas must either be accepted or rejected on understandable grounds.

9. Never talk unless you are sure of it.

Your colleague states, "The husband says, 'Your brother is coming to dinner tonight.' The wife says, 'My brother is not coming to dinner tonight.' Both of them are telling the truth..."

Don't immediately stand up getting irritated. He may be right, if he is not referring to the 'same person' or 'same night'. The best quality of a good reflex action is, in order to argue or criticise, you have to analyse the statement of others and be sure that you have not omitted any points in your own argument.

Finally in a group discussion, when you don't know the answer correctly, be silent. As Abraham Lincoln correctly quoted, "It is better to be silent to let others think that you are a fool, than to speak and remove all their doubts".

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Embarrassing situations:

When I was giving a lecture at
Bhadrachalam
The organisers from the front row
Sent me a small slip
That I did not put my zip on
I was in full suit.
All of them were enthusiastic
How I correct it.

While you are answering a question or giving a speech, some comment from your classmate may amuse the entire auditorium, bursting into laughter. Don't be frightened. Be prepared to retort or ignore it. Never loose your nerve or get irritated. Speak when you are angry and you would be make the worst speech ever that you regret forever.

In interviews or personal discussions you are sometimes confronted with questions

that seem strange or awkward. Try to find out why the person is asking it. May be the interviewer is testing your emotional balance. Sometimes, your lecturer may query you about your personal matter, possibly in an attempt to establish a relationship to make you overcome your mental deficiencies. Some questions that seem very personal may actually be in the best interest of your studies.

Vocabulary skills: Develop your argumentative abilities and writing skills. Try to write down in twenty sentences the story of a latest movie. Keep it aside for two days and read it again. You may find it not up to your satisfaction. Re-write it. To your pleasant surprise soon you will find your style of writing improving.

Let all your friends speak for five minutes each. The topics can be funny, but the speech should be intelligent and interesting.

- Whose body in this world do you choose if you were given an option to stay in it for a day? What do you do then on that day?
- What would have been the present society if there were no male and female genders but all of us are unisex like earthworms? (The duets in the films would have been most boring, evening parks might loose their charm and rush).
- What do you do in those 5 days if a nuclear war is to take place in another five days?

Cerebral laziness: There are more than a million jokes, originally created by someone. Did you ever create a joke of your own? In the initial stages you feel it impossible but soon you begin to get amazing ideas.

Like our body if mind does not get the regular exercises, it also becomes rigid. A person's world is created by his mind. When we stop having fun using our mind with creative ideas and with new possibilities, we become mentally inflexible and this is called cerebral laziness.

Cerebral laziness is more harmful than physical laziness, particularly to students. Why are some students mentally lazy? Many mental barriers keep them from innovative thinking, first among them being laziness. The other blocks are lack of direction, fear, other habits and diminutive enthusiasm. Learning new things involves confrontation with the unknown, which results in fear. The only way to combat fear is to travel through it. "Fear knocked the door. Courage opened it.

Nobody was outside..." is one of the best quotes I have ever read.

When a student tries to solve a problem, fear of doing a mistake makes him hesitate and stop working further. One should know that mistake is different from failure. Never associate 'breakdown' with 'collapse'.

To come out of the mental blocks, a student has to sharpen his expertise in three different fields, Logical thinking, Arithmetic dexterity and Communication expertise. These skills not only help in his/her aptitude tests but also aid in day to day life.

Think about the following hypothetical situation:

- If you were going to die tonight, what would you most regret not having told anyone?
- If you have a device that can answer a question about your future, what question would you ask?
- If you could inhabit an animal or bird's body for a day, which animal or bird would you choose? Why? What would you do on that day?

Logical thinking visualises the problem from all angles and leads to maturity. Develop Logical proficiency. Develop your capacity to argue.

A mother stole bread for her child. Argue on her behalf and again on behalf of the shopkeeper. Will your arguments differ if she steals from a jewellery shop for her son's education?

Make it simple: How do refrigerators work? Bulbs glow? How do the batteries store and release energy? How Eyeglasses perform? Why do we breathe? What makes the seasons? How do we hear the sounds? How do airplanes fly? Why is the ice slippery? Why and how do we get sick? What is plastic?

How many of the above can you answer in a simple single sentence without much complication? Try and you would find it very difficult to communicate, though you know the correct answer in great detail.

There are two ways of conceiving and conveying a thought. One is to make it so simple that there are obviously no deficiencies, and the other way is to make it so complicated that there are no obvious deficiencies. The first method is far more

difficult. Believe that every time when you have to choose between "making things right" and "making things simple", the simple path is much better for you. It is called 'kiss' principle, Keep It Simple and Straightforward.

The art of simple writing: Robert Gunning is one-person crusade against pomposity and murkiness in writing. He advises students to write as plain as they talk, to make it simple. He gives an example.

Instead of writing 'Your suggestion has been received this date and after careful examination and discussions with our Board of directors about the various implications in your proposition, we found it is good for us to follow the proposal made by you and we are glad to inform you that we are contemplating to implement the same from April, which eventually falls into the next financial year', a reply such as 'Thank you for your suggestion. Our Board agreed to implement it from next financial year beginning' would be better.

Fog index: He suggested ten simple principles to fight against fog (confusion) and his doctrine is called 'Gunning Fog Index'. It illustrates how easy it is to read and understand something if written in simple, straightforward and uncomplicated language consisting of small sentences. Gunning says that people who suffer from either inferiority or superiority complex use fog language to cover up their supremacy or otherwise. Fog index is very useful particularly to students. It keeps them comfortable while writing in easily understandable language. The fog principles are :

1. Keep sentences short. 2. Pick the simple word against the complex word. 3. Choose the familiar word. 4. Avoid unnecessary words. 5. Put action in verbs. 6. Write like you talk. 7. Use terms in such a fashion that readers can imagine. 8. Tie in with reader's experience. (He says... this is the essence of positioning.) 9. Make full use of variety. 10. Write to express and not to impress.

The art of being simple is the art of knowing what to overlook. The art also includes the knowledge of dividing paragraphs, adding adjectives, pre-climax, climax and post climax and above all the 'style'.

Arriving at a simple answer does not mean that you should not think about the complicated and more genuine alternatives.

We don't find better solutions and alternatives if we satisfy with the first thing that comes into our mind. Think of how many names your parents would have considered before selecting the best for you. Would you really like to have been called by the very first name that came to your parents' minds?

Normally people stop at their first conclusion that appeals to their logic and they consider it to be a good one. When a person stops at the 'Good', he misses the 'Best'. When he stops at the 'Best' he may miss the 'Excellent'. If he rests with the excellent, he may miss the 'Correct'.

When you are to solve a problem, first analyse it. Build up your power of inference, stretch your imagination and look beyond the obvious.

A dwarf moves up to tenth floor in the lift and starts walking from there to reach his office at the fifteenth floor. But while coming, he directly comes down. Why? Immediately the 'best' answer that strikes us is... he being a dwarf cannot raise his finger to press the fifteenth floor button. But there may be many other reasons. 1. He may be interested in exercise and feels like walking 2. He may be admiring the visual beauty from the tenth floor to 15th floor. 3. Before going to his work, he may want to spend some time every day with his friend working at tenth floor. 4. He may like other people think that he is working at the tenth floor where a prestigious office is located.

While appearing for the aptitude tests, leave your other problems outside and engage in working out the problem before you. Take your time. Never rush. It takes some time to enter into deeper layers of concentration. First know thy-self. That is the best and the foremost reflex action.

When to complicate: Contrary to simple writing, Edward De Bono suggests certain situations where one should complicate the things and write, to get the following results:

1. When you have nothing to say, complicate it. Nobody can dare to criticise your book.

2. Critics love your piece of work because they feel privileged that only they can understand the book. They can write lot about the book and take the responsibility of interpreting it for the benefit of innocent common people like us.

3. People would buy it to show their cultural superiority though they do not read it.

4. In future a cult may develop around the book.

5. The author is rated as the highest philosopher struggling to express his most complicated, intricate and obscure thoughts.

6. There may be group discussions and stage shows trying to make it more complicated.

How do you weigh a cat? Take you time. Think a while to tell us at least four alternatives. According to Edward De Bono, known for his concept of lateral thinking, there are many choices. Tie the cat in a plastic bag and weigh. Or you can also keep a biscuit on the platform of the weighing machine and find the weight while it is eating. Or drug the cat and weigh. But the best thing is to hold it with you and stand on the scale. Deduct your own weight from the total.

Telephone conversation reflexes: whenever you call somebody, however close to you, identify yourself and open your conversation with a question, 'Are you busy or can I talk?' Informing your reason for calling shows your respect to the other's time. Some calls are routine and require no preparation, but while making an important or crisis call, you should note down all-important points for discussion beforehand

The Diary writing concept: Your reflex actions would be bright, if you cultivate the habit of writing diaries. While writing a diary, you date with yourself. You recall the mistakes committed during the day.

Diaries set goals. You are spending fifteen minutes a day, thinking of your long-term and short-term goals. Diary is a mirror, where you can see your growth, your early dreams shaping into reality. When you read your earlier diaries, you can healthily smile at the immature part and how silly you behaved some time back.

Once a burning problem... One horrible sleepless night... appears to be so ridiculous when you see it 'now' through your diaries. They give you a bird's eye view about how problems fizzle out along with time.

Diaries are thus helpful for introspection. There is no examiner. No corrections. No marks. You can write whatever you want. You can ventilate your emotions. You can

improve your language skills. Your style of writing develops. It adds up to your own creativity that is essential at a later stage of your education.

I have been writing diaries since 1963. I have all my diaries around me, almost every page written. They show me in red-ink underlined achievements like winning Sahitya Academy Award; President's Silver medal for my first film on one side, my pit falls, stupid, mad, ridiculous and brainless thoughts on the other side. I smile at them, sometimes feel sorry for them and at times proud of the accomplishments. I see 'me' there in my diaries.

A person who cannot spend ten minutes for his self-actualisation is not recording anything about him to look back at a later stage.

IN BRIEF....

- **More than your intelligence and memory, your reflex actions play vital role in your career.**
- **Reflex action means understanding others, and making yourself understandable.**
- **There are various ways to develop communication techniques such as verbal I.Q., self-therapy etc. Practise them.**
- **Choose your friends for better reflex actions.**

ENTHUSIASM AND CONCENTRATION

Enthusiasm is the fertilizer
That develops your dreams
It is the sparkle in your eyes
That shows you the stars
It is the grip of your hands
That leads your vehicle
To the skies unlimited

A student lacks concentration due to two reasons: Having no interest in his studies. Having more interest in other things than his studies.

A student motivator and psychologist shared this interesting experience with me. "Once a 13 year old hyper- active child was brought to me by his parents. His problem was lack of concentration. After talking with the boy I understood his problem. I told his parents that I have an excellent medicine sent by my guru from Himalayas and to be used for forty days".

He continued, "I also told them that I would give it free of cost provided they accept my two conditions. First, after taking my medicine the boy should keep himself mute... silent for at least four hours. The medicine is to be administered at 6 o' clock in the evening everyday without fail. He should abstain from eating anything for two hours before taking the medicine and for another two hours after taking it." He continued smiling, "They gladly accepted and promised me to follow my

instructions. They were happy because it appeared so easy to practice and moreover the medicine was free. They took the medicine and left. After forty days they told me that there was slight improvement. I asked them to continue with my prescription. The medicine was nothing but Glucose. My intention was certainly not to propagate superstition, but to keep the boy from excessive talking and eating. They were the main causes for his lack of attention and concentration and his feeling 'dizziness'.

Many students complain that their main problem is their inability to concentrate. While studying, they say their thoughts wander away.

According to psychologists, every three seconds a thought desperately tries to gain focus of a student's attention. The 'subjects' for thinking, however stupid they may be, never run out. They hammer and chisel away concentration and they persistently tap on the doors of consciousness and try to gain an entry. We have to shut the doors tight and focus on the subject at hand. That is called concentration.

Dawdling: Some students spend hours in front of books but end up with no significant addition after their so-called 'completion' of their studies. Finally, when the time comes, they stare at a blank piece of paper unable to start writing. Unfortunately they are unable to relax because of their guilty feeling that they had wasted their valuable time. They want to lighten up their burden of guilt and perform but they immerse themselves in self-pity.

Instead of cursing oneself not being bright enough, one has to understand the real cause behind the lethargy. We have been discussing various reasons that pull back a student both physically and mentally. Lack of concentration ultimately leads to aversion to work. The main reasons for 'aversion' are two: One – The fundamentals of the lesson not being understood, two - 'size' of hard work piled up because of one's lethargy. The student thinks that he can never break through the 'barrier of pain'. Thus, by leaving everything to the last moment, the student finds his work mounting up, which again causes him further tension. Then how should he cross the 'barrier of pain'?

A teacher was encouraging her students to identify the Seven Wonders of the World. Watching a girl unable to pen them, she gave some clues to help the kid.

Hinting about the Great China Wall she said, "Think of a wall that stood courageously against the hailstorms and hurricanes", and continued describing

Panama Canal, "Irrespective of seasons, it flows without stop, against all odds".

The girl thought for a while and wrote. The teacher said, "Another wonder is a tower, slightly bent, but never accepts defeat. It leans but never falls". And then she gave them clue about Tajmahal, "People say it glitters in moonlight. But if you have an insight, you can see its glitter with your heart". The girl wrote.About Pyramids she pointed out, "It's a monument, a symbol of concentration, science and hard work that time could never destroy".

The teacher then beckoned the girl to check what she wrote. The shy kid was hesitant, walked slowly and showed the teacher her answers, "Mahatma Gandhi... Martin Luther King... Mother Theresa... Helen Keller and Albert Einstein".

Perplexed first, the teacher recovered to announce those names to other students. After a brief silence, the classroom vibrated with claps...!

These people, symbolising courage, love, determination, insight and concentration are certainly extraordinary wonders of the mankind. Observe closely. They all have something in common. They loved their job. If a person knows 'how to do a job', he simply does the job. But if he knows 'why to do a job' and loves to do that job, he will be a leader, an architect of destiny of many and may become a legend later. It is not how you work, but the direction of your work that determines your progress.

This principle applies to every student. Instead of concentrating on 'how to study', if you understand 'why study', the result can be more positive. Otherwise you can never cross your 'barrier of pain' and then choose escape routes.

Real wisdom is discarding those things that are not necessary. Leave and come out of your unproductive, time consuming enticing activities though highly ecstatic.

Enthusiasm is derived from the two Greek words. 'Enthos' means - Spirit, 'theos' means – Within. Enthusiasm denotes the spirit within. Acquiring wisdom should be as enthusiastic as a sport. Reading gives us a feeling that we are not alone. Do you know that five minutes of additional reading per day, from day one, keeps you ahead of at least 90 percent of other students in your class?

Try to understand the subject before memorising it. Check up at regular intervals; say once a week, whether you continue to remember them in tact.

The unknown devil : A girl is fearful to go out in darkness. A boy fears seeing flowing water (hydro-phobia). Outwardly, there appears no reason. But when they are at I-am-not-ok-stage, their parents might have warned them, "You are girl... don't go out in dark... You may drown in water... don't go near the see." It is enough to create these phobias in them at a very early stage of their life. Two behavioural therapists called Joseph and Harry in 1955 proposed that every person has four windows. They are respectively, Open (known to all and including himself), Blind (not known to him but known to others, like his snoring etc), Hidden (own / personal secrets unknown to others) and Unknown (neither known to him nor to others). Every student and parent should understand the concept of the last window. Here is an example.

The administrative building of a corporate company, standing in the middle of the city is a proud possession for their employees. They used to lavishly light it up from outside. It was a feast to the onlookers.

The managing director of the company, while signing the voucher for painting the building, doubted why the same job is taken up for every six months. The subordinates told him that it is due to the bird droppings.

"Why our building only?" he queried. It was found that by evening, birds were attracted due to the trees and insects. Proposals were made and budgets were prepared for cutting of tree branches and pest control for insects, but the executive had the same doubt, "When there are many slums and other areas in the city, why insects exceptionally prefer our building?"

After a thorough enquiry it was found that the building was being lighted up half an hour before the entire city was illuminated, with an over enthusiasm to show it to the public. By ordering the staff to delay it by one hour, the executive could save lakhs of rupees to the organization. A lesson taught in business management course, but is also applicable in real life situations.

'Johari's unknown window theory' contemplates to locate actual reason behind a particular effect. A student's lack of concentration and /or disinterest in a particular subject may be the final effect. But the root cause lies elsewhere. It may be Paradigm Shift Deficiency (PSD), Problem Analysing Capacity (PAC) or Sluggish Reflex Action (SRA). These factors are interdependent and lead to 'Lack of interest' and ultimately to 'lack of concentration '.

A beggar's elder brother died. The person, who died, has no beggar as his younger brother. How? With your intelligent paradigm shift capacity, you must be able to answer this question. Don't worry even if you cannot. I give you a small tip, 'All beggars need not be male'.

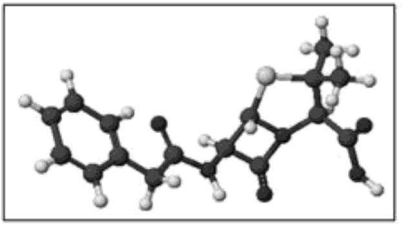
If you cannot answer even then, your Paradigm Shift Capacity is at a lower plane. To solve certain problems, sometimes you may have to change your entire hypothesis, and that is called paradigm shift. Similarly, Problem Analysing capacity contemplates your ability to appraise the problem from different angles to arrive at the solution.

James Bond waited patiently at the Villain's den to know the secret code to sneak into it. As one assistant was entering, the sentry said, 'twelve' and the assistant replied, 'six' and was allowed to go in. As another assistant approached the door, the sentry said, 'six' and the assistant answered, 'three' and was also allowed. Having got the clue, Bond advanced towards the gate. The sentry said 'ten'. Unhesitatingly Bond said, 'five' and was caught. Why? Think for a while and if you cannot, here is another clue. Bond would have also said 'three'.

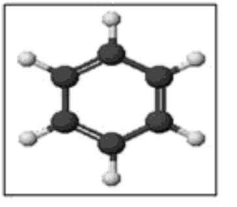
Without the clue, it may be difficult to arrive at the solution, but with the tip at the end, you should be capable of knowing that the trick lies with the number of alphabets in the sentry's words. The word 'twelve' has six alphabets, and the world 'six' has three alphabets.

PAC and SRS are the two problems normally children face. Their problem Analysing capacities are low, and reflex actions are sluggish. Then how to over come them? First requirement of PAC is a bird's eye view of the problem and correct approach to derive the answer. Sluggish Reflex Syndrome (SRS) requires some explanation.

Let us assume your teacher is explaining: "Hydrogenating ethane or Penicillin formula or take another example of an acid-base reaction: CH3OH + HCl_ CH3OH2+ + Cl-. We are comparing benzene ring structure..." And draws a picture.



You may not understand ABC of above lecture, if your reflexes are sluggish. Then why aren't your reflexes fast? They become slow, when you forget what you studied in your previous class. For example, in your tenth class, you might have remembered Kekule's benzene structure and fared well in your exams. But when you promote yourself into the next standard/grade, you should 'continue to remember' the bond formula to understand ring structure. When you do not catch up with the speed of the lecture, you loose interest in Chemistry and it becomes a nightmare. You loose your ability to concentrate and distance yourself from the subject. You postpone studying it, and that makes it all the more difficult later.



Not being aware of the logic behind it, parents often complain, "Our child is intelligent but...Works hard but.... Gets good marks but..."

No education psychologist can transform a student overnight. The student also should open up and be ready to change. And change systematically according to a program. The student should become a partner of the progress towards the goal with the active help of his mentor. Unfortunately the teachers have no time to teach for those students, as they have to complete their syllabus. On the other hand, a student is hesitant. He doesn't know how his teacher would behave when he expresses his doubts. He doesn't raise the doubts because he may be punished, ridiculed in front of all. So he dares not to ask his teacher to explain again. It would be ideal if either of both of the parents sits with the child and tries to spend some time. Try to understand what is happening with his studies. How he is faring. Where

he is failing and why? Unfortunately today's parents do not seem to have the time. Therefore they do not know what the problem is. The consequence is... the child suffers. Here the educational motivators come into picture.

Some times it is difficult to locate the point of aversion. If you are asked to eat frog legs, unless you are used to eating frogs, your brain rejects and you vomit it. There is no logical reason. You just don't like it, that's it...! Johari 'unknown' widows concept contemplates the same. If you are not told that it is a frog and if it is tasty, you would eat it. Or if you have an inclination to try some new food, you may try it. Or if you were given at the early childhood, you might continue to relish it.

If you examine carefully, at some point in your life you would have started hating the idea of eating frogs. May be your Indian culture and the food habits of your family indirectly influenced you not to accept it. Similarly, a child's study habits also depends on the environment at home, the habits of TV watching, the kind of programs being watched, the gossiping habits of the parents, their relationship with the kid, and above all their enthusiasm to teach their child.

To understand, at what point a student is sickened about a specific subject, it requires a regression process. Let us suppose a child developed an aversion of algebra. This leads Trigonometry to begin to disinterest him. Unless he knows what is Pythagoras, he cannot understand $\text{Sin}\ \theta \div \text{Cos}\ \theta = \text{Tan}\ \theta$. Regression study should go to the extent whether he understood that the sum of angles in a triangle is 180 degrees. After locating the exact point of confusion, the process is to be reconstructed.

If you cannot add the total of 12+13+14 in 15 seconds, it may be difficult for you, if you choose to study courses like engineering or chartered accountancy, subjects based on fundamentals of mathematics. If you insist studying them, you should begin to build up and strengthen your knowledge right from the basics. That is the time your passion to achieve your ultimate ambition begins and you start to develop a healthy appetite for the subject.

The only thing we have to fear is fear itself– nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyses needed efforts to convert retreat into advance.

Never fear shadows. They simply mean there is a light shining somewhere nearby.

Types of students: Before discussing the methods to develop concentration, let us analyse the methodology of studying. Students are of three types, Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic. Answer the following questions.

1. When you spell: A) Do you try to see the word? B) Do you use a phonetic approach? C) Do you write the word down to find if it feels right?

2. When you talk: A) Do you dislike listening for too long? B) Do you enjoy listening but are impatient to talk? C) Do you gesture and use expressive movements?

3. When you concentrate: A) Does untidiness or clumsiness distract you? B) Do you become distracted by sounds or noises? C) Do you become distracted by activity around you?

4. When you meet someone again: A) Do you forget names but remember faces? B) Do you forget faces but remember names? C) Do you remember best what you did together?

5. When you contact people on business: A) Do you prefer direct, face-to-face meetings? B) Do you prefer the telephone? C) Do you prefer to talk with them while walking or participating in an activity?

6. When you read: A) Do you like descriptive scenes and imagine the actions? B) Do you enjoy conversation and hear the characters talk? C) Do you prefer action stories and not a keen reader?

If your answers contain more 'A's, you are a visual learner, if 'B' you are an aural learner and 'C' denotes kinaesthetic learning.

Visual learners : You learn through seeing. You learn best by reading and re-reading the textbook and notes. You love writing and rewriting notes. You always need to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of a lesson. You tend to prefer sitting at the front of the classroom to avoid visual obstructions. During a lecture or classroom discussion, visual learners often prefer to take detailed notes to absorb the information. If you are a visual learner, here are some suggestions.

1. Use more visual materials such as pictures; charts, maps, graphs.

2. Have a clear view of your teachers when they are speaking.

3. Use multi-media (e.g. computers, videos and filmstrips).

4. Study in a quiet place away from verbal and visual disturbances.

Aural learners: You learn through listening, by verbal lectures and discussions. Auditory learners interpret the underlying meanings of speech through listening. Written information may have little meaning to you until it is heard. You often benefit from reading text aloud and using a tape recorder. If you are an aural learner:

1. Create mnemonics to aid memorisation.

2. Discuss your ideas verbally.

3. Dictate to someone while they write down your thoughts.

4. Participate in class discussions/debates.

5. Make speeches and presentations.

6. Use a tape recorder during lectures instead of taking notes.

7. Kinaesthetic learners: You learn through moving, doing, and touching. Tactile/Kinaesthetic persons learn best through a hands-on approach, actively exploring the physical world around them. You may find it hard to sit still for long periods and may become distracted by your need for activity and exploration. If you are a kinaesthetic learner, here are some suggestions just for you:

1. Take frequent study breaks.

2. Move around while learning (e.g. read while on an exercise bike).

3. Use bright colours to highlight reading material.

4. Dress up your workspace with posters

Finally and more importantly, nobody fits into any perfect categorisation. Many students are multimode learners who don't have a single preferred learning style. They learn best through combinations. If you have multiple preferences you are in

the majority, somewhere between fifty and seventy percent of a population.

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Attention deficit:

Why does our attention shift so often?
Probably this is an inheritance
From our ancestors, who stayed in caves
But had to be constantly thinking
In the night
Of what dangerous man-eater
Was standing outside their cave
They were a disturbed lot in those days
But now... what about us?

There are no caves and man-eaters now. But yes, much more dangerous brain eaters like TV, chatting and cricket surround us now.

Hunger, noise, visuals, sound and odour are the five disturbances to our five sensory organs respectively. Ask your elders to watch TV with low volume. If you are in the habit of reading with some audio on, go for mono instrumental music. Never go for songs with lyrics. Your sensory organs function well with good illumination (eyes) smell (nose) and quietness (ears).

Keep a bottle of water near your table to avoid going to the fridge frequently. Maintain a fixed time for 'eat-intervals' in case you cannot hold your hunger for two to three hours. Don't visit the kitchen in between. Keep some fruits or other eatables

near your study table, but never eat there. Treat it as a holy place not to be disgraced. If you do not have much space, then move away at least a few feet while eating and return to continue your study.

Attention, Retention and Concentration: Brain receives all the inputs from its five sensory organs ear, nose, mouth, skin and eyes and processes them through a Selective Filter and sends them to either Amygdale or Thalamus, through two different channels, one being for immediate action which is called 'Attention' and the other for 'storing in memory', otherwise called 'Retention'. For example, if somebody tells that you should run away when a mad dog attacks you, your ears send the message to your thalamus part of the brain. The selective filter transfers it to the memory for its retention. When a mad dog actually attacks you, the eyes send the message and the filter sends it to the amygdale for immediate attention, which releases adrenaline so that you can run fast. That is how mind acts as a bridge between five gnanendriyas and five karmendriyas e.g. hands and legs etc. Now let us discuss how to retain concentration.

1. Observe a karate player before entering the arena. He punches into empty space (the thin air). Avoids talking. Takes heavy breaths. Tries to go into the mood of fighting. Likewise, you should also get into the mood of studying. I do not mean that you should throw empty punches into the air before studying.

2. Students with ADRD (Attention deficit retention disorder) never sit or lie on bed with a stable body posture for more than ten minutes. While talking to others (or even while watching TV) they constantly reposition their hands, move their legs and swing their body. To overcome attention deficit syndrome practice sitting like a statue. Don't move or shake any part of your body, even a small finger for ten minutes. If you were to practice this exercise daily, all muscles will be under your control.

3. Don't discuss your next day's interesting programs like going for a movie or sight seeing or picnic, just before starting your evening studies.

4. In the initial stages of education, we are taught to read loudly. As a student goes to higher class, he develops the habit of silent reading. But still some people are not comfortable with it. Loud reading certainly helps you to concentrate better, but silent reading is advisable particularly when you are in a hostel or at a postgraduate level.

5. Devloping speed with which you should read is also an art. It depends on whether you are reading a lesson or a novel. Again, first reading should be slow to understand the subject. With the help of keynoting and underlining, revision should be fast. It is not important how fast you read and complete a lesson, but how you retain it is important.

6. While studying, postpone your disturbing thoughts to a 'worry time'. We shall discuss the concept of 'Worry Time' later.

7. Next time when you talk to your friend on phone, ask one of your family members to record it without your knowledge. You listen to it later. Note down how many urgent and important points that you have discussed in that one-hour conversation with your friend, whom you are anyway going to meet the next day. There will be none.

Friends: Your friend can by your asset or liability. The definition of friendship is 'Faithful Relationship, Inspired by Equity, Nurtured by Dignity and Shaped by Honesty, Integrity and Purity'.

In my book 'Success in Five Steps' I wrote, "A friend is he, in whose company, you can kick off your shoes, be unmindful of your hair and stay as you are. A friend is he with whom you can sit on a riverbank the entire evening silently, and still feel that you both had the best ever conversation".

Many of us do not break in so deeply into these aspects while making friendship. It involves you or your friend sometimes to spend money that cannot be repaid. You may have to give up quality time to help your friend, or stand by him where others may ridicule you simply because he becomes an unpopular person. You must support your friend through a crisis and in turn he is there for you. Unselfishness and mutual understanding are very important. Check up whether you and your friend can stand for this test.

In a bad company, even an intelligent and industrious student slowly becomes an escapist, naughty and futile in studies. This is the reason why many students, particularly from rural areas loose their earlier rankings, once they leave their parents and join urban hostels and land up in a bad circle of friends. Friends fall into six basic categories.

1. Intelligent: In combined studies, a friend explains you a difficult lesson. You are benefited. As he recalls while explaining the lesson to you, he also gains. The same holds good for him too, when you teach him. It is called 'Intelligent' move.

2. Exploiters: You give an important book to your friend and feel delicate to return it back. He takes a loan and doesn't pay back. Your friend starts exploiting your weakness. By your action you suffer a loss while they gain. You fall under 'Helpless' category.

3. Bandits : Your hostel mate steals your purse. In his criminal action, your loss is to his gain. He is a bandit.

4. Crooks : To avoid the proof of theft if he destroys the purse along with the photo of your mother, your loss is more than his gain. He is more than a bandit. He is called a 'crook'. Generals, who cause vast destruction and innumerable casualties to innocent people in return for a medal, fall in the same group.

5. Stupid : Friendship is certainly for sharing feelings. But how many of your friends talk with reasonable sense and necessity? If you are spending most of your time gossiping with them, watching movies and without any productive work, consider that you are among stupid friends. 'Stupid' are those who gain nothing by their deeds and you gain nothing by their acts except stimulated enjoyment.

6. Idiots : Imagine a situation where your mood is spoiled and could not concentrate for days together, as you knew about a bad comment made by your friend about you in your absence. He is an idiot. He is the most dangerous virus. The best examples of idiocy include spreading bad rumours, hurting others under their own emotional stress, sadism and irresponsible commenting. An 'Idiot' is he, who gains nothing but causes loss and embarrassment to us. It is not our enemies, but our closest friends that cause more heartburn to us.

Crooks, stupid and idiots are most attractive, friendly and talkative. They mesmerise you. They appear to be adventurous and make you feel that you are the most fortunate to have friends like them. They have the knack of bringing you down to their level, by instilling laziness and introducing bad habits. They make you smoke and feel heroic. They have a different definition of 'enjoying life'. They program your brain accordingly. Once you fall into the trap and taste the escapist route, it would be very difficult for you to come out of the web. The real test of a friendship

isn't that nothing ever goes wrong between you, but what you both do when something does go wrong!

Influenced by friends, youngsters are attracted easily towards trying everything at least 'once', which is thrilling. They are prone to influence, unfortunately more on the negative side. Only few can understand the real thrill in being positive.

A young boy by name Jay used to influence his group of friends with his excellent arguments, and convince them with his convictions. One day he said, "I don't want to end my life without enjoying the pleasure of smoking a cigarette. After all, our life is a one time affair."

Induced by his point of view, everybody except one Vishnu, lit the cigarettes. "Are you not convinced with my philosophy?" asked the first one to Vishnu. "It's an excellent idea. Good thinking. I am influenced by your words" said the latter.

Jay said, "Then you have no courage to start it. One should have guts and bravado to begin something new". All boys clapped holding cigarettes between their fingers. After three years Vishnu went to him. Showing the gold medal he said, "Real gut is outgrowing our past. When you said everything should be experienced once in life, the words influenced me. I thought why should not I experience being a university topper. Thank you very much for your suggestion."

Why teenagers talk more: No sooner did my teenaged daughter steps into the house from her school, than the phone rings. Before I could respond, she is deeply immersed in conversion with her friend, who accompanied sitting next her on the school bus. I was worried and wondering what emergency could have erupted in the fraction of time between her leaving the bus stop and reaching our front door.

But my daughter's side of conversation sounds, "Yah... Cool... You know of course. Is it really? Ha amazing. O fine..."

Irritated, I warn her that I am expecting an important call and she reluctantly shortens her chat to 15 minutes. As she surrenders, the telephone rings. And it's again for her.

"No further phones" strictly cautioning her, I go to my room and when I return, I find her dialling. I shout at her "I said no phones!".

"I'm calling all my friends to tell them I can't talk on the phone!" she shrieks back at me...!

Dr. Linda Sonna, author of "Parenting A Teenager (A survival guide for parents)" gives the above demonstration while suggesting various tips to parents in dealing with their children, particularly teenagers.

Initially... may be up to the nursery stage, children listen while parents talk. They believe their parents to be walking encyclopaedias and are emotionally dependable. Later they start babbling. They graduate to talk and gain self-assurance. They now begin to share everything that happened at their school with their mother... and if permitted with their father. They try to gain approval for their pranks and deeds. As the husband is busy (!) with his own work, the lonely mother involves in lengthy conversations with her children. She may believe it to be an emotional bond. Later this turns into gossiping.

As the children grow, they enter the third 'I am O.K. – You are not O.K.' stage at which they develop immense faith in themselves. They are more convinced of their feelings and faith. They don't want to listen further but want to convince their parents with their ideas, viewpoints and philosophies, which the latter cannot 'understand'. Here comes the stage when the child begins to find others (outsiders) convenient to share his or her experiences. They are now 'friends'. The so called 'communication gap' at home begins to widen.

Sharing with friends after sometime leads to arguments, for friends too have their own firm opinions and beliefs. They are young and full-blooded. Arguments become fierce debates. Adrenalin is released into the blood stream for the satisfaction of both. After a heated argument, the body metabolism comes back to normal stage. Everything is cool and calm. They part to meet again.

Some students, who can neither argue nor influence others with their ideas, cover up their dependent attitude and try to impress their friends by simply 'discussing'. This is the reason why I-am-ok (parent) students make friendship with an I-am-not-ok (child) student and vice versa. The former wants to influence and the latter wants to impress... and both talk.

The four harmful consequences of excessive arguments are:

1. When a issue is discussed, disputed and argued, (say... whether a particular movie is good or bad) you recall some points to strengthen your argument (a good melodramatic situation or a melodious song in the movie) and stimulate the unnecessary neuron bonds, thus asking the brain to provide much garbage space.

2. When space is provided for unnecessary bonds, more valuable neurons pertaining to education go to the passive part and that is called 'Mind Decay'.

3. The adrenaline released at the time of arguing may lead to hyperactivity.

4. While talking, the electro magnetic pathways vibrate ten times more than in 'silent mode' and during arguments they are up by fifty times, leading to loss of memory.

More importantly, after an exciting conversation with friends or a heated argument at home, when the student begins to study again, those over-riding neurons, with the support of already released adrenaline, dominates the attentiveness with the memories of the argument or discussion. This disturbs the study. This is called lack of concentration.

Child talk : Having something to say about everything, a child who talks excessively may delight its parents and more particularly the grand parents. But constant talk may lead to Hyperactivity. Parents, who listen attentively to everything the child has to say and name it as 'caring', should know whether the kid is inadvertently engaged in unwarranted talk. They should educate the child to be aware of its surroundings. The child should soon learn to know whether others are listening or not.

Children with 'attention deficit hyperactivity' often interrupt because they're afraid they'll 'loose the thought'. Simple, pre-arranged hand signals can give the child a clue. For example, patting a table can indicate, 'You're talking too much; get back to work.' Otherwise when they grow they may not be in command of their A.M.O.C (Automated Mouth Overload Control). In short, they just don't know when to stop.

A newly married girl came to counselling with a peculiar problem. Her husband neither stops talking nor allows her to talk. Surprisingly even the husband accepts his weakness. Further probe revealed that his father died at an early age and his emotionally dependent mother encouraged him to tell her 'everything' leading to his A.M.O.C deficiency from his childhood.

There are various reasons why we talk unnecessarily. We needlessly want others to include us in their plans; unreasonably want someone to know that we care; we want to unwind at inappropriate occasions etc. We think that our silence leads to communication gap. No. Excessive talk confuses others and may not help them understand us.

Let me emphasise one point clearly. Nobody wants you to be a Rishi or a saint. Be what you are. Go ahead, play your favourite games, be energetic and naughty, do your monkey business, watch the TV and play on computer, but be silent before and during your study. Be silent even after completion of your reading for some time. It is advisable to cultivate this habit of being silent whenever possible. When you are talking, you are a lawyer and when you are silent, you are a judge. Watch the successful people. They prefer to be silent and talk only when it is necessary.

'The happiest people are those, who use leisure as a means of mental development, who love good music, good books, good company and good conversation. They are not only happy in themselves; they are the cause of happiness in others' said the great poet John Keats.

The more we try to explain, the more we confuse others. Try not to complicate your thoughts and conversation. The more we talk, the more we tax our brain.

The art of not talking:

Any conversation should benefit both the conversationalist and the audience. Otherwise it would be better to exercise silence. Unless you are a Baba or a Politician, your opinion is of no value to others in normal circumstances.

Let us suppose you are travelling in a train. You have three things to do, watching the nature out through the window, listening to your Walkman or the best thing is to read a book. Instead, you are gossiping with an unknown stranger, whose name you do not even know. Normally the conversation starts with a question, 'where are

you going?' Both of you share your opinions on all worldly matters of mutual interest. After two hours of unnecessary chatting the other person asks you, 'Will congress come into power in the next election?' and if you say, 'My opinion costs you ten rupees', amidst confused silence, he stares as if something is wrong with you.

Your opinion does not merit a paisa to him. Then why are you wasting your time on unnecessary discussions, gossips and arguments? Discussions exhaust you, gossips harm others, and the worst part of conversation is 'disputing'. It can never change other's opinions.

Talking when it is not necessary is extraversion and is to be avoided. Not talking when it is necessary is introversion and should be shunned.

Limited talking for relaxation is good, sharing experiences may be better, parting wisdom is the best, chatting is bad and unnecessary argument is the worst.

The more you win at your arguments, the more you loose your friends.

Love and Infatuation: Falling in love is another reason to loose concentration on studies. Nobody in the world accepts that his or her 'feeling of love' is infatuation. Many cases of love at the college stage do not end up with marriage. Falling in love at the very early age is like selecting a car, which you

are going to buy after five years. Your tastes may change by that time. If you can wait, you have the option of selecting a better model and more luxurious one with your superior financial status. This line of reasoning appears nonsensical to some people, who argue that love just 'happens' and it's body chemistry. Without going into controversial disagreements, let us enlighten some of the fundamental steps to choose a good lifelong friend.

- First impression is not always the best impression. Never open up in the premature stages of friendship and reveal your weaknesses. Talk less and observe for some time to arrive at the final conclusion.
- Avoid making friendship with people who utter these words: "I probably shouldn't be telling you this but...She would kill me if she knew I told you this...Hope you won't tell him that I mentioned this"
- Finally and more importantly, in case of infatuation, be more careful in the beginning stages, as you are bound to loose your rationale, blindly

accept whatever the other person says and tolerate his/her weaknesses.

Sensationalism: There are two main neurotransmitters in the brain, one that controls the activities such as Attention, Learning, Stability and Memory called 'Acetylcholine', and another that triggers Motivation and Pleasure called 'Dopamine'.

May be, both act in different directions. Scientists think that a person's 'novelty seeking activities' such as bogey (bungee) jump, adventure sport etc., are controlled by dopamine. It may be positive or negative. Some times it may be illogical also. With an example this can easily be demonstrated. A six-year-old boy takes an imaginary pistol from his pocket, jumps from a chair and shoots. Parents enjoy it. If an elderly man does the same thing, it means his Acetylcholine has not 'matured enough' with his age. The more dopamine you have rushing around in your brain, you are the more of a sensation seeker. Naturally hyperactive children are more sensation seekers. Obviously their Acetylcholine takes the second seat.

In fact, achievers like film stars, sports persons and politicians are sensation seekers. They enjoy the sensation they create. That's why it is easy to motivate a hyperactive child to success than a normal one.

But sensation and concentration do not go together. Many students think of other things other than studies. The first and most important suggestion that we give them is to 'be silent whenever possible'. This is a very easy, simple, straight forward and highly effective solution. Many of them listen to it but never apply it.

Some of them even approach psychologists for improving their concentration levels. As a doctor cannot treat a diabetic patient who is fond of sweets, no behavioural therapist can help a student develop his concentration unless he reduces his babbling.

Let us now discuss various exercises to improve concentration. Some of these exercises may sound funny, but are suggested by behavioural therapists of great repute. I follow many of them even now.

1. Place and paraphernalia: Do you have a place for study you can call your own? Set aside a fixed place for study and nothing but study. After a while, study becomes

part of your behaviour and whenever you sit down in that particular place, you'll feel like going straight to work. Look at it this way. Your association with your place of study in your 'class room' primes leads you to your attentive listening. Similarly your 'place of study' wherever it is, at home... or in a hostel, should prime you for immediate attention, concentration and study.

Some students have the habit of studying while resting on the bed or even in the kitchen. Never change your place of study. At times, when you feel for a change, you may go to an open place like upstairs, balcony or garden in front of your house, but never study in your bedroom or in kitchen.

- Let your chair face the wall, to avoid distraction. Never sit near the 'open' window facing it. Get habituated to read alone. Take inspiration from a scientist, who enfolds himself days together in his room and concentrates on his job..
- Cultivate the habit of reading in libraries. Combined study is normally not suggested, for it may promote unnecessary gossiping.
- Read under a table light and keep the other part of the room dark, to help create a soft surrounding and elevate your mood.

2. Time control : Start your study every day exactly at a given time and according to a timetable. If you examine your day carefully, you'll find that you tend to lunch and dine at predictable times. 'Time controlled behaviour' is fairly easy to start.

- Before you begin an assignment, write down on a sheet of paper the time you expect to finish.
- Don't read after midnight.
- When you shift from one subject to another, allow yourself a five-minute interval.
- When you are bored with a dry subject, change to mathematics or any other favourite subject of yours... or begin writing.
- Set small, short-range goals. Divide your assignment into subsections.

3. Mood Control: Be careful of what you do just before your studies. Don't get involved in gossip, arguments and long discussions prior to your studies. Never involve in long phone conversations prior to your study time. This may launch you on the course to daydreaming. They are like overflowing reservoirs. They try to occupy every corner, engulf every available place in your mind. For the same reason,

while studying most students tend to think about tasks and events that they haven't finished or obligations they have to fulfil. Unfinished activities tend to be remembered much longer than completed ones. Don't start any job that is likely to be left unfinished just before studying. In other words finish what ever is due. This would help you concentrate and study well.

- Ask your friends not to ring up after six in the evening.
- Request your parents not to invite guests during your study hours. You may be confident about your own abilities and capacities to concentrate and study, but believe me... it is not that easy. It would be difficult for you when they chat in the drawing room, asking you to study next door.
- If your mind wanders, don't sit at your desk staring into a book and mumbling about your poor self-control. Stand up and go away from your books. Take a breath of fresh air. Never talk to friends on phone or with family members during these intervals. Don't even try to look in the direction of the TV... not even for a second.
- Before you start your study, stand for a few moments before your study table (or mat) silently. Close your eyes and try to think of nothing. This is called cleaning the slate. I accomplish this ceremonial habit every day before my writing a novel or script, and with my practical experience over three decades, I ensure you that it has immense effect of clearing the mind from the debris of thoughts.

In the beginning, you may find it impracticable. It tests your patience, and you would be irritated for not getting immediate results. Many give up at this stage. After practicing for three to four weeks, you would begin to enjoy the results.

4. **Mind control:** Sit before a clock, note the time and start thinking about one of your favourite subjects. It could be about a movie or cricket. After a while, suddenly you will find out that you have deviated from the topic. Then note the duration. Test it for a few times, at different points of time in a day and during the night. Then calculate the average time that you are able to concentrate on the 'subject of your interest'. This is your.... plus or minus a few moments... your Concentration Control Capacity (CCC). Continue to increase the time of your CCC. If you practice this exercise for about a week, you will find from your notes that the power of your concentration towards your interesting subject gradually increases.

Now apply this process of thinking to your lessons. You will be traumatised and shocked to find that the capacity to hold your present thought (about your lessons) is about 10% of your original CCC.

It won't go beyond two minutes. Don't be disheartened. Continue to practice for another two weeks and you will be pleasantly surprised to witness the change. The only prerequisite is that you should have patience and belief in yourself to carry out this exercise.

If you practice this exercise for about a week, you will find from your notes that the power of concentration towards your interesting subject gradually increases. Now steadily apply this process of thinking to your lessons. You will be shocked initially to find that the capacity to hold your present thought (about your lessons) is about 10% of your original CCC. It won't go beyond two minutes. Don't be disheartened. Continue to practice for another two weeks and you will be pleasantly surprised to witness the change. The only prerequisite is that you should have patience and belief in yourself to carry out this exercise.

5. **Pain control:** After continuously studying for some time, some students, particularly girls experience pain in the lower back and legs. Brain produces its own group of natural painkillers, called Endorphins. Another brain chemical Serotonin enhances feelings of comfort. Patrick Wall, a physiologist suggests 'Pain Meditation'. Close your eyes and feel that the pain is a physical object. Concentrate where the pain is, measuring its dimensions and shape. When its shape is clear, imagine wrapping it in a paper and taking this parcel out of your body and placing it a long way. These types of mind control may sound too simple to be effective but with practice they really can work, says the physiologist.

6. **Worry time:** We can never kill all our thoughts but certainly postpone it. This is a magical daily rite suggested by Prof. John Kosher, a student psychologist. Allot an hour every day for your worries. Call it 'worry time'. While studying, if you get any thought, write it down in a piece of paper and postpone the same for brooding at it over your worry time. Let us suppose your worry time is 4.00 to 5.00 p.m. While studying in the morning hours, if your favourite actor enters in your thoughts, note it down and keep them aside to think at your 'worry time'. Same way topics like: thinking about the scolding by your mother, worrying about the teacher's outburst on you, imagining a joy bike riding, discussion with a friend, super man, spider

man.... everything that enters into your mind, throw them to the 'worry time'. Exactly at 4 p.m. open your list and try to think of those topics one by one. You will be pleasantly surprised.

You would find that you had finished thinking about all those matters in that list within ten minutes. The serious thoughts and imaginations that caused a stir in the morning turn up silly by the evening.

The 'worry time' technique may appear funny, but it gives good results.

7. **Desire control**: Here I would like to introduce a method suggested by behavioural therapists, which steers the dopamine to proper channel avoiding unnecessary diversions. This is called 'Spider monkey Technique'. This is the best technique that I suggest to all the students.

When a monkey shakes a spider web with its finger, the insect comes running, anticipating a fly there. Monkey again flings the other side and the spider moves towards it. After a few "fly-less" investigations, it realises the monkey business. It won't try again.

This example highly resembles Buddha's Nirvana. He says all our miseries are due to our desires. He envisages killing the desire. Controlling the desire is also the primary message of Bhagavad-Gita. But we (particularly students) cannot control our desires. Nevertheless we can certainly postpone some of our desires, particularly when they

are disturbing us. The move desirous you are about unnecessary things, the less concentration you have.

We find children reacting aggressively when their demands (to have an ice cream, movie and shopping etc) are not met. The more mature a person is, the less is, the disappointment. A matured person can 'wait'.

Our amygdale part of the brain (about which we have already read) is like a monkey. Unless we keep it under control, it stimulates violently even for petty things like songs from the other room or the smell from the kitchen. It kindles our sensory organs and is the source of our emotions like frustration, anxiety, anger, hunger and pleasure. This is otherwise called 'disturbance'. Excessive desire and disappointment are the main reasons for lack of concentration. Try to avoid or postpone for a while the experiences that excite, rouse, stir and tempt your 5 sensory organs. This is a tricky exercise.

Suppose your friends invited you to your most favourite hero's movie. Say 'no' to it or postpone it. When you are intently listening to the lecture, you listen the voice of a latecomer at the door asking the lecturer's permission to enter the class. Suppress your urge to look to at this student. Thus control your visual craving.

In the same fashion, when you are excited to tell your mom an incident that happened at your institution, postpone it for a day. You are very eager to narrate your friend a Harry Potter movie that you saw the previous night. You are about to tell. Stop. Hold your desire for two days. Control your urge to talk.

Suddenly you hear the tune of your favourite song from the next room. Don't go, even if you are not engaged in any important work. Be in command of your aural sense.

When your craving for an ice cream seems to overtake you, postpone it for few hours. Control your urge to splurge on ice cream. Place your most favourite sweet on a table, sit across it and read. Plan to eat it after completing your day's studies. After completing your studies, put it back in the jar without tasting it. Difficult...! But when you practice it, and are able to win over 'you', the kind of confidence you gain gives you more satisfaction than yielding to your sensory organs.

This is only the beginning. Like a spider that never tires in weaving its web, after

practicing these exercises, you would win over your desires and would be able to control your thoughts and deeds. You start working on what your mind tells, but not on what your heart desires. And that is Nirvana.

Motivating the sensory organs: Before eating an ice cream, the child is attracted by its multiple colours first (eyes), enjoys the fragrance next (nose) and finally tastes it (mouth). Go to a movie on the first day, first show and study for five minutes an ardent fan watching his hero's movie. He enjoys the movie with all his five sensory organs. He doesn't blink, for he is afraid that he might miss something important. He is not disturbed by the sounds that surround him. He is not even conscious of the rub of the elbow of the person manoeuvring to get to his seat in the dark. He does not notice immediately, even if there is a burning smell in the theatre. You would often see a person engrossed in watching a movie and completely surrendering himself to it would leave his mouth wide open.

Because he is so immensely engrossed while watching his favourite hero's movie, he remembers it for years to come. Concentration is directly proportionate to interest. This is the reason why parents should nurture interest rather than giving negative suggestions like, "Work hard, otherwise you will be nowhere in this competitive world." They should say, "Work smart. Certainly you will be on the top of the ladder".

Here is one more interesting thing about our sensory organs. You would have noticed that we amplify the stimulation of one sensitive organ by reducing the involvement of other organs. For example, when we inhale the fragrance of a flower, we 'close' our eyes to improve our ability to smell. In other words we energise our nose to its peak performance level. Similarly when we are enjoying the music that we like the most, we close our eyes. We also close our eyes to heighten the sense of touch. Thus our concentration depends not only on our internal mood, but also on our five sensory organs. Let us now discuss how to increase / restrict the aptitude of our sensitive organs, enhance their productivity and shield them from external disturbances.

Eyes: Prolonged study affects our eyes and we feel them burning. Some of you may also find your eyes watery. Eyes are the primary organs that keep you concentrated. Here are the tips:

1. If you wear eyeglasses, clean them regularly. Don't clean while you study.

2. Keep your books at optimum distance.

3. It is always advisable to keep the entire room dark, even in daytime, by closing the windows and curtains and reading before a table light.

4. Use tube lights for your table light. This way you can avoid the unnoticeable flicker of a normal bulb and consequent damage to your eyes. Arrange the light in such a way that the rays don't fall directly on your eyes.

5. Use 'yellow' coloured tablecloth. If you are used to sitting on a mat and read, use yellow cloth on your mat. Your eyes are more comfortable with a yellow backdrop.

6. A student's attention deteriorates after an hour's study. Never read for more than one hour at a stretch. Take ten minutes rest in between. Suppose you are studying for three hours. Then you have two intervals of ten minutes each. This concept is called Mind Holiday.

7. Keep a bowl of water and a cloth near your study table. In the first interval of ten minutes, sit erect and raise your head slightly upwards. Cover your eyes with the wet cloth. Close your left nostril with your right hand middle finger, and breathe through your right nostril for two seconds... hold the breath in for two seconds... and release it slowly for three seconds from your left nostril, by closing the right with your right thumb. Continue the exercise for five minutes.

8. For next five minutes, reverse the procedure and inhale from the left nostril. After the exercise, remove the wet cloth and continue your study. The ten minutes exercise everyday gives you enormous energy during your study gap. Normally when we breathe, we do not clear our lungs. This exercise eliminates the residual carbon (dioxide) from your lungs in completely and you feel fresh and energetic. It aids your physical and mental health. Soon, in about three week's time, you notice the freshness, newly generated energy and the difference.

9. Between second and third hours of study, go to your balcony or an open space, or stand near your window, close your eyes and feel the fresh air. During the ten minutes interval, try to recollect what you have studied during the previous two hours.

10. If you feel sleepy and tired on a particular day, go to sleep. Don't force yourself

to stick to the schedule. If you feel your eyes are strained, place cucumber (keera) or wet cotton on them.

Mouth : Mouth is your first enemy as far as your studies are concerned. It always wants something to munch. At regular intervals it tempts you to rise from your chair, drives you towards kitchen in search of something delectable.

1. Never consume sweets, chocolates or cokes in the nights, before or while studying and refrain taking them completely, at least a month before exams. This keeps your senses on a constant high alert. The more you eat them, the more your body has to strain in converting them into glucose, thus causing hyper-amnesia (a type of dizziness about which we have already discussed.).

2. To keep your mouth engaged, place a clove or cardamom (Elaichi) in your cheek. Whenever your concentration lapses, bite it once. Within a month you would be pleasantly surprised to find the clove intact in your mouth without a single bite, reflecting the considerable progress you made in your ability to concentrate.

3. Drink as much water as possible during your study time. Have a glass of fruit juice and one glass of Soya powder mixed water in the study breaks.

4. For a sound sleep take a banana (if you are not overweight and obese) and a cup of milk before going to bed.

Nose: Scent, as we all know evokes a forgotten memory. There is a strong link between the smell, episodic memory and emotion. During the process of evolution, in its earlier stages, nose as a sensing organ played the foremost important role for the primitive creatures than the eyes. The olfactory system, which processes smells, is directly connected to the emotional centre of the brain. When you are suffering from cold or sinus, you would have noticed that due to the irritation your power of concentration reduces.

1. Sit in a cool and fairly fragrant room and study, and you will find the difference in your concentration level.

2. Before preparing for your study, smell 'mint' (Pudhina) for a few seconds. The fragrance of mint increases your attentiveness.

3. Light an incense stick near your table while you study. Associate your studies

with the smell of an incense stick.

4. If you are allergic to the smoke, apply any one of the following powder/paste near your neck: Kasturi, Punugu, Goroochanai, Javvadhi, Aragatha and Athar. They are available in any grocery market. Their smell is differently pleasant being spicy, warm, slightly camphor based or sweet and penetrating. Choose one of them according to your taste. Apply them only when you study.

Skin: As face is the index of mind, skin is the mirror of your health. It reflects and foretells in advance many physical troubles and ailments particularly pertaining to your liver. Itching and dry skin disturb your concentration.

1. Cultivate the habit of taking a mildly hot or cold-water bath before you start studying in the evening. It will make you feel fresh and new. You'll feel rested, and ready to get more out of life. At day's end, it will encourage a good night's sleep.

2. Before that, for better results, steam your face for few minutes with turmeric water. It revitalises, refreshes and keeps you young

3. If possible, go for steam bath once a month. The warmth opens the pores of your skin, creating a flow of perspiration, which lifts out the impurities of everyday living. Your skin will be deep cleansed like never before, leaving it soft, supple and healthy. Cold shower after steam bathing rejuvenates you. It relieves tension through muscle relaxation.

Ears: Some students are habituated to read while the music is on. Try to get out of that habit. Classical music is supposed to aid learning in some cases, but music other than that tends to be distracting..

1. To avoid external disturbances consider using earplugs or cotton. Earplugs are small plastic pieces and not those used for stereos..

2. If possible, record the lesson and listen to your own voice by keeping it by your bedside as you go to sleep.

3. Immediately on waking up from the bed, put on the Karnatic or Hindustani Ragas (preferably Suprabhata or Bhoopala Raaga) and go ahead with your daily routine. Till you complete your bath don't talk to anyone. In the other sense, once you complete your studies in the night, try to minimise your talking till you take

your bath next morning. It enables you to be in the meditation mood, silently accomplishing your early morning routine. This would enable your neuron bonds strengthen and what you studied the previous night becomes permanent.

General: Stand silently for a few minutes before you start your studies. It is called cleaning the slate. This is an important exercise that I do regularly, before starting my script writing.

1. As you sit down to study, put a scarf around your neck or wear a cap. Maintain it strictly when you are studying. Remove it even if you go for a glass of water. This may sound funny but think why certain companies have a compulsory dress code for their employees. The ceremony will have a psychological effect on you that you are studying and it keeps you away from daydreaming to certain extent.

2. Arrange all necessary items like books water, etc., before settling for studies.

3. Don't waste your precious early morning time, searching for the above. Keep everything ready in the night itself.

4. After completion of reading one subject, don't jump to another. Give a gap of 5 minutes.

5. If you are habituated either to read aloud or to study while listening to music, try to distance yourself slowly from these habits.

6. Never read during late nights. Never use medicines to stay awake.

7. If you are comfortable, you may prefer to be a part of 'combined study', but watch out and do not participate in gossiping.

8. Regulate your speed of studying, depending on the importance of the subject. For example, don't waste your time studying a non-detail textbook in detail.

9. Before sleeping, try to recall the keynotes prepared by you.

10. Maintain regular timings for reading, eating and sleeping. Don't settle to read immediately after dinner. Don't read in bed, in a sleeping posture.

11. Keep discussing your subject with your parents and friends.

12. Get your doubts clarified immediately. When you don't understand a particular point, never hesitate to ask your teacher/ lecturer/ parents. Don't delay clarifying your doubts.

13. After completion of your studies, go upstairs of your flat or move out of your house for five minutes to enjoy the quietness of the night. It refreshes you and ensures good sleep.

14. Read daily. Even if you are on a holiday... or at your grand pa's village... or mama's house... read at least for half an hour.

Practice these tips and you never feel tensed up before exams. Be confident and cheerful while writing the answers.

The pre-exam revision : It is not the load that breaks you down, it is the way you carry it. During the preparatory holidays, sleep for half an hour in the afternoon, take a bath, close the doors and create an 'artificial dawn'. Read before a table light though it is the evening time. Apply 'one day-two dawns theory'. As examinations approach, you start spending twelve hours on reviewing and still feel that there is a lot to study. Don't get tensed up. No person in the world feels totally prepared for his exams.

1. Never try to revise one subject for too long at any one time. One hour is just enough. But note that revision means not just reading a chapter and vaguely remembering a few sentences immediately afterwards.

2. During revision, you may surprisingly find some of the subject matter missed your attention completely. Don't panic. You might have some-how missed it. Glance through it and decide whether it is necessary to read it at the eleventh hour. More particularly don't try to do last minute cramming standing outside the exam room.

3. Some of your friends may be telling you that they stay awake till the crack of dawn. Don't be depressed. It may work out to them. Stick on to your healthy habit of sleeping before midnight and ensure that you are fit physically and mentally.

4. Avoid sweets, oily foods and cool drinks a month before exams as they make you feel drowsy. You may get a brief high due to initial insulin release, but it will drive you to 'sugar coma'. If you do not have a regular coffee/tea habit, don't make it habit now to stay late hours.

5. If you have a sleep problem due to tension, stop reading half an hour before bedtime and relax. Don't watch TV then. A glass of milk along with a banana drives you to a good sleep. But never take milk in the night 'before' study.

6. After completion of your studies don't get tempted to call on your friend even for few minutes to know about his studies. Your intentions are good but the late night conversations won't stop there.

Some students have the habit of postponing the revision, till the main reading is completed. It is only a pretext for postponing. You can simultaneously do both the jobs.

Writing an exam : Can you answer this question in one second? If 2 hens lay 2 eggs in two days, how may eggs can 1 hen lay in 1 day? Due to tension or with an excitement to answer as soon as you read the question, you do mistakes. It always pays to think before answering. Particularly in competitive exams, you face simple problems with a hidden twist. Never fall into the trap with overexcitement. The test is to know your hyperactive symptoms.

Stay relaxed and confident before answering. Spend the first 2 minutes previewing the question paper. Allocate time in proportion to the marks. Just because you know the answer in detail, don't write beyond the requirement. While taking your examination, keep these points in mind for better results:

1. Have the entire picture of the answer. Determine the length, time to be spent answering depending on the marks allotted to it.

2. Focus on how to start, elaborate, reach a climax and end it. The answers should be brief but cover all the points.

3. Before staring, close your eyes for 30 seconds, take a deep breath, calm down and be pleasant.

4. Improve on your grammar and spellings. Think in English while writing in English. Don't write 'Rama Ravana killed' which may be correct in your colloquial language. Say 'Ram killed Ravana'.

5. Be careful with construction of sentences and particularly with pronounces. If you write, 'Rama killed Ravana as his wife was kidnapped by him', the examiner

confuses to understand who kidnapped whose wife. If you write, 'Ravana kidnapped Sita and then got killed by Rama', it gives a meaning that Ravana made Rama to kill his wife.

6. Don't get confused with words like 'accept / except / expect', affect / effeffct, its / it's etc.

7. Avoid repeating the same words in a sentence or paragraph. Know exactly when to use a simple and compound sentence. Don't use more commas. Divide paragraphs correctly.

8. Last but not the least... Write to communicate. Not to electrify. Finally... comprehend a fact. Exams come and the exams go but you will be there, sane, smiling and ready to enjoy the summer, cheer up.

The temple environment :

9. We are discussing how to motivate your sensory organs to 'study mood'. My intention of asking you to accomplish these exercises is to do up your place of study into a place of worship. This process of 'study' is akin to a serene behaviour you adhere to in a temple. Your study room, the silence, the fragrance of an incense stick, applying sandalwood to your neck, tying a scarf while studying (like wearing a cap while praying at a religious place), Meditating for few minutes before your study, not talking to anyone after completion of studies... would automatically elate

you to a sense of involuntarily rumination and isolation. Without your notice, you prefer to avoid unnecessary chatting. Your family members also would notice this difference in you. They start 'respecting' you. Imagine Tennis and Chess players, University rankers and boys and girls of International repute. The family members not only love them immensely as your parents love you, but also 'respect' them for their success and accomplishments. Only few students command this 'loveable respect' from their parents who are proud of their children. Be one of them. You feel like climbing up a ladder and different than the other ninety-five percent watchers. And you also know that now you are in the process of belonging to that group of five percent performers in this world.

Good luck to you!

IN BRIEF...

FIVE 'D' TECHNIQUE

'Mind Cleaning' makes a student bright, prosperous, energetic and above all enthusiastic towards life. It's a ten-minute daily exercise, three minutes in the night and just seven in the early morning. It gives a positive approach to life, increases retention power of mind (by developing permanent neuron bonds), capacity to adhere to the time schedule and avoids procrastination.

I try to explain the technique briefly here and for any further clarification you can go through my earlier book, 'The Art of studying' wherein it was named as 12-c technique. As I want many students to know about this modus operandi, I am repeating it here again.

We teach this technique in our character enrichment classes. It may appear non-practicable for some, who are lazy even to fight their laziness. But you will witness how simple this is. Those who followed it meticulously for a month conveyed me that they are surely and superbly benefited.

How to practice: Small screen viewing before sleep makes your 'night study' an unavoidable 'part time ritual'. You develop a feeling to finish off your studies at the earliest and revert back to your interesting conversations / visuals. You may hold the book in your hand but you inwardly treat the study hour as a responsibility thrust upon you by yourself. To avoid such a state of mind, you should make sure

that there are no 'further interesting things' in the night. Now the modus operandi starts.

1. Tranquillity: After completing your studies go to bed and close your eyes. Turn to a side and close your ears with a pillow. By closing your two important sensory organs, eys and ears, you are being engulfed into a stage of quietness. Feel that your mind is transforming into calmness. Just watch your breath for a minute. Only one minute. It's like cleaning the slate before writing. Next, start recollecting your subjects that you studied before coming to the bed. You have one-minute time to recollect. Let us suppose that you studied two lessons, the story of Ramayana and Archimedes Principle during your three-hour study. Condense them to think for one minute, as 'Ram... wife... forest... kidnap...fight and rescue' and 'Article immersed in a liquid...loss of weight...equal to...displaced liquid weight'. This condensed form of recollection is called 'keynoting' by which, you are supplementing the neurons in your brain with these ingredients. Now adjust your pillow and settle in your habituated comfortable position and slip into sleep while continuing to think the subject matter. This is called 'recall'. As said earlier, sleep has three phases: Drowsy stage (DS), Slow Wave Sleep (SWS) and Rapid Eye Movement Sleep (REM). As you go on thinking of your subjects and slip into the drowsy stage, the ingredients given to your neurotransmitters gradually become 'Neuron Bonds'. The electro magnetic waves in the brain, which rage like a hurricane during all the daytime, comparatively calm down during your sleep. Hence these bonds become Permanent Neuron Bonds (PNBs). If you recall once a week again, the entire subject that you studied during the week, you will never forget the same in your lifetime,

The early morning proceedings: As you wake up, stay on bed for another few minutes to continue the following exercises:

2. Scheduling: Divide your day into small compartments and plan your timetable before rising from the bed. It should be meticulously planned even for a holiday. How are you going to spend your lunch break at your college and with whom? How much time are you going to watch TV in the evening? Which channel?

It is called Time Planning and Management (TPM). Once you are habituated to TPM, the word 'busy' would wither away from your dictionary.

After planning, dismantle the futile compartments (chatting with friends, watching the telly for more than half an hour etc) and reconstruct the timetable for

betterment. After scheduling, construct for betterment, within the construction. Let us suppose you plan to watch a lousy serial wherein one lady marries three husbands or vice versa, substitute with another healthy program. Likewise, instead of chatting for one hour at lunch with your friend, plan to cut it to half and take rest in your college library, to conserve your energy for the next lecture session. Choosing your friend for lunch also matters. Vagabonds sit with vagabonds.

3. Critical analysis: While on bed, think for a minute and assess how much your net-worth has increased during the past twenty-four hours. What are your productive accomplishments during the day? Increase in net worth means adding something worthy either to your brain (creation) or heart (recreation). In other words it is 'Today minus Yesterday' (t-y). For example, till now you don't know about 5-D technique. Today by reading this book, you are familiar with it. It means you have enhanced your wisdom. Likewise, teaching your younger brother or sister enhances your affection bank with them. Listening to a new raga, enjoying a perfect holiday, knowing how to cook...everything is either creation or healthy recreation. Animals have no 't-y' net worth increase. They don't enhance their wisdom or pleasures in their lifetime. Some people also just live the same way.

Next think of the mistakes that you have done during last twenty-four hours! Have you quarrelled with your brother or sister over a particular TV channel of your choice? Have you thrown the food plate accusing your mother that it is not up to your liking? Think of them... to correct your mistakes in future. This daily evaluation and self-criticism helps you to develop your personality for betterment. No animal analyses its past mistakes. It has no chance also. Just one mistake, it looses its life.

4. Compare and consume: As you are resting underneath a fan with a blanket, over ten million children of your age in this country are already on their work. A ten-year-old boy, who laboured till midnight serving tea to lorry drivers on the roadside dhabas, is again on the same job before sunrise. A small girl of tender age is sweeping your house when you are still dreaming. A twelve-year boy is climbing the up-hill on his cycle to give you the morning newspaper.

Compare with them. There are thousands of children in hospitals suffering with unbearable acute pain, doctors being unable to diagnose and cure. How fortunate you are compared to them. God has given you wealth, health and above all, lovable 'parents'. A minute's comparison every morning with those unfortunate children,

gives you a feeling of compassion and positive thinking towards life.

Start the day with a happy note. Suppose on that particular day, there is a cricket match between India and Pakistan. Or you are going to your grand pa's place in the evening. You are stimulated from the moment you wake up, anticipating live action on TV or the journey. Thus we feel elated anticipating the forthcoming incident. But if you can visualise, every day has some enthusiasm round the corner. Just you have to locate it. Eating hot samosa and watching the drizzle through a window in a rainy season, a morning walk in the winter, listening to the Cuckoo in the autumn, going to a picnic and watching a full moon must enthuse you. Life is for consumption. If one looses enthusiasm, there is no difference between him and an animal. Think for a minute about an upcoming event of the day. That idea kindles you for the entire day.

The above four exercises to be executed while you are in bed. I would like to remind you that you have not yet talked to any body since you started your studies yesterday night. Your neurotransmitters are still fresh and uncorrupted. The neuron bonds have strengthened under the calmness of electromagnetic path waves during your sleep. Now step down from your bed.

5. Exercise: Put on the tape recorder and listen to the morning ragas or Suprbhata while brushing your teeth. Wait. There is one more exercise before it. Smile. Look at you in the mirror and smile for a few seconds. Looks funny but neurotransmitters like Dopamine (pleasure) and Serotonin (feel good) in turn stimulate your Acetylcholine, which is the source for your attention, learning and memory. Smile is the most valuable thing available freely. Still some people suffer from constipation of smile.

After brushing the teeth, bend ten times touching your toes with your fingertips. The blood circulation to the brain converts the short time memory into semantic memory. If you have no neck problem, spend a minute staying topsy-turvy (Seershasana) by the side of wall for another minute.

Well. Now you can start your daily routine. Start with good communiqué. Instead of shouting 'coofffffeeee' with a harsh tone, say 'good morning' or 'Hay' or 'How well did you sleep last night?' Greet the first person that you have seen at the beginning of the day, may be our father or younger sister, of course not the neighbour's daughter or boy.

Start the 5- letter Technique from today. Within a month you will find the difference.

IN BRIEF....

- Your day starts as you wish it to be. You can control your mood for the entire day, by thinking positively on your working up.
- As you clean your teeth and body, spend 5 minutes for cleaning your mind. And that is called 5-D technique.

EPILOGUE

After reading the entire book you may find yourself mired in a web of doubts. Is this possible? Watch the diagram. Yes, it is possible.

Just try. When you find the fruits reaping, you feel more motivated and get energy for further implementation. Watch the left side diagram carefully- Your sixth finger is always hidden. That is 'skill'. Try to locate it. This is the secret of success. You may get one more doubt. If this is so simple, why not all the students do implement these techniques?

Here I want to quote a great writer, Ayn Rand. In her famous book 'Atlas Shrugged', she articulates that there are some people in their respective fields who carry the world on their powerful shoulders and if they shrug, the entire globe collapses. May not be true in the literary sense but certain people can surely change the history at least temporarily.

Imagine Bill Gates closing down Microsoft or Mahatma Gandhi retiring while fighting for our freedom. These people have a say in the history and hence they are called leaders. They serve as role models and influence us. They are performers.

There would be five percent performers and ninety five percent watchers in this world. This book is for a performer, and I am sure that you want to be in that group. Let us verify whether you are going to be a watcher or performer. Do the following exercise to know your future, whether you are going to be performer or watcher.

Think of a number between 2 and 9 (suppose it is 'X'). No. Don't go on reading. Once you complete this, you will know the answer and you will be missing an opportunity to know about your future. You don't require any pen and paper to calculate this equation. Just think of a number between 2 and 9 and proceed working out on it.

Multiply your number by 9 (9x). Deduct 5 from it. (9x-5). Then make it a single digit number, by adding the two digits. For example, if you have arrived at 42, make it 4+2 i.e. 6.

Now allot one alphabet to each number. Ex: A for 1; B for 2; C for 3; D for 4; E for 5, F for 6 etc. Replace your Number with the said alphabet. For example, if the final number as said above is 6, and then your alphabet would be F.

Now think of a country starting with the said alphabet. Your letter is F and hence you can think of either Finland or France etc. In the same fashion it can be America, Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Egypt, England, Cuba, Briton, Burma, Canada, Denmark, Ethiopia, Germany, or any other country, beginning with your letter. Now, think of an animal, the first letter of which is the last letter of your imagined country. Let us suppose your country in France, the last letter being E you can think of Elephant. If it is Finland, then it can be Donkey of any other animal of your choice, starting with D.

Now is the last step. Imagine a fruit's name, first letter of which is the last letter of your animal. If your animal is Elephant, last letter of which being T, you can imagine Tulip flower.

And here is the final result. If your final answer is orange, you are going to be a performer. Don't try it for the second time.

Got it?

Good.

I wish you a prosperous career.

Questions

1. You may be highly knowledgeable. But can you stand out in utter confusion? Answer these questions quickly, say in not more than 5 seconds each, and test yourself.

A) There are 6 oranges in a basket and you have taken two from it. How many will remain with you?

B) There are 6 oranges in a basket. If I take 3 and give one to my friend from it, how many will be there in the basket?

C) There are 6 oranges in a basket. If I take 3 and give one to my friend from them, how many will be there in the basket.

(Answers at the end of the Book)

2. These three questions are testing your capacity in not being confused under pressure.

A) If two cats can kill two rats in two minutes, then how much time will it take for one Lakh cats to kill one Lakh rats?

B) If two cats can kill two rats in two minutes, then how much time will it take for one cat to kill one rat?

C) If two cats can kill two rats in two minutes, then how much time will it take for one cat to kill two rats?

This riddle must be done by not using paper and a pen. Try it. Take 1000 and add 40 to it. Now add another 1000. Now add 30. Another 1000. Now add 20. Now add another 1000. Now add 10. What is the total?

If you were to put a coin into an empty bottle and then insert a cork into the neck, how could you remove the coin without taking out the cork or breaking the bottle?

A student's intelligence is normally tested with his skill in answering mathematical puzzles. Here is an interesting question based on maths and physics. The TV news says that the present day's temperature is 00 Celsius in Kashmir and it would be twice colder the next day. What would be the temperature the next day? (For answers see the last pages).

How can Ram be behind Sita, when Sita is behind Ram?

You are seeing a Red Indian here. Can you see anything else?

If a clock takes two seconds to strike two bells, how much time will it take to strike three bells?

9. If a clock takes 5 seconds to strike 5 O' clock, how long will it take to strike 10 O'clock?

(Basing on same principle as question No. 5)

If one hen lays 1 egg in one day, how many eggs do two hens lay in 2 days?

Walking down a lonely country lane a man walked down a lonely country lane with

no streetlights. There was no moon. He was dressed all in black. Suddenly he heard a car speeding towards him. The car did not have its headlights on. There was no room on the lane for him to step out of the way and avoid being struck by the car. But yet, the driver of the car screeched to a halt just in time - how did the driver know?

There is word in the diagram. What is the word?

13 How many babies are born per minute in this world approximately? A) 100 B) 250 C) More than 300

Two persons, one standing at the door of his house and the other walking up and down the pavement, were counting passers-by for a whole hour. Who counted more??

In a time machine you can go to future or past and return to exactly the same spot in space, after one hour. Would you try if it comes free of cost?

If one orange and two apples cost 5 rupees, and one apple and two oranges cost 4 rupees, then how much does two oranges and one apple cost. This is Education.

Take the numbers from 1 to 9. Create "hundred" by adding or subtracting them without changing the order. It can be done as 123-45-67 + 89 =100. Now make 10 in the same fashion.

Which of these numbers 2 can evenly divide? 5., 6., 7., 8

What are countries touching Indian boarder? This is Memory.

If I show you a painting and say, 'His father is my father's son', who is he to me, if have no brothers?" How fast you can answer... depends on your Reflex-Action.

Three men go into a Hotel. The receptionist said the rent is Rs. 30. So each man paid 10. Later, the receptionist realised that the rent is only 25. He sent back through the boy Rs. 5. They paid Rs. 2/- as tip to the boy and kept one rupee each with themselves. That means... each has paid Rs. 9/- to the hotelier, and that amounts to Rs/- 27. The bellboy kept 2/- with him. Total: 29. Where is the remaining one rupee?

I wanted to gamble in a match between India and England. The odds were 2:1. I have 100/- with me. If I bet it on India, I will get 200 more, and on England I get 100 more. If I invest 50:50 on both the countries, I gain 100 rupees if India wins and loose 50 on

England. Hence my profit would be Rs. 50/-. But if England wins there would be neither profit nor loss. What would be the safest bet to get the maximum profit? I should not loose anything, but get some (maximum) amount whichever country wins.

When I went for the same betting, my friend introduced me a fortune- teller. The fortune-teller told me "Give me ten rupees I will tell you the scores, even before the match begins. If my prediction goes wrong, I would give you 100/- more as compensation. Shall I have to take the offer?

To find certain solutions you require slight innovation. Try this. A dog is tied to a rope 10m long. There is a large juicy bone 15m away. How can the dog get the bone without the assistance of anybody or anything else?

Sometimes it is difficult to understand other person's point of view. One bulky man and a thin man were walking under an umbrella, which has no holes. Having found that he is getting wet, the bulky man pushed the thin man out of the umbrella. Even then, the bulky man was drenched and not the thin man. How?

Stay calm. This is a simple question. Never undermine your capacity. You can do it. Try to work out on it. You have 12 gold coins of same weight, except one, which is of less weight. How can you find it? You can use the balance machine only three times.

Go through the previous question about gold coins. Because one of it is of less weight, you may have solved it easily. But if one of it is of different weight (you don't know whether the culprit coin is of more weight or less weight) then the question becomes most complicated. Think whether you can solve it. If not see the answer. If you are confused with the answer go to the question (given in the next page) and try to understand and answer it. Revert back to this question again, to understand the technique. Don't leave it frustrated.

A king employed 100 artisans to make gold toys of 16 grams each, to be presented to all the children in his kingdom. Per day each artisan produced around ten toys and after a month, the king new that one of the artisans is cheating by using only 15 grams and swindling 1 gram per toy. The king has a weighing machine. But only weighing once, can he know the culprit?

Can you make V (five) by removing one straight line from IV (four)? Can you make III

by adding a single line to II (two)? Easy. Isn't it? Now think:

Can you make VI by adding a single line to IX?

Can you make IX by adding a single line to XI?

Can you make VIII by adding a single line to IX?

The following questions are for your common sense test. It should not take more than 5 seconds each to answer them, but of course, these questions are nothing to do with your anger

How many eggs can a boy eat with empty stomach?

B) What would you do if you find a fire station burning?

On which side of the cat is the greater hair contained?

You can hold it only with your right hand, but never with your left. What is it?

You are 16 years older than your sister who is 8 years now. How old will you be when you are twice as old as she?

Test your language skills: how many different words can you create from the word "STRANGER"? A... An... Star...If you can create about ten words, it's good. If you can make out 25, it's excellent. Try.

A passenger starts at 5 p.m. from Agra and reaches Delhi in five hours i.e. at 10 p.m. From Delhi a train starts for every one hour, at 5.30, 6.30 7.30 etc. How many such trains would cross the passenger before it reaches Delhi?

Keep your brain always busy by attempting to solve the intelligent puzzles. This is an excellent and smart question. At a three-road junction; you are confused which one leads to your destination, Rampur. You find two brothers standing there and you know that one is 'always' a liar and the other is always a truth teller. You dont know who is a lier and who is a truth letter. But... By asking 'only one' of them 'only one' question, how can you find your route?

Write a sentence as lengthy as possible, without using alphabets A and E, such as "Sky is our limit".

The following problem was posed at an M. N. C interview. A bottle contains sweets, another cookies and the third has a mixture of both of them. All labels were wrongly pasted. Without looking into the bottles, and just by taking only one piece from ' only one bottle', how can you re-paste the labels correctly?

A doctor and his son are in a car accident. The doctor dies on the scene. The son is rushed to the hospital with a brain injury. In the operation theatre, the surgeon says, "I can't operate on this boy, he is my son!" How can this be?

I want to pluck a mango from the tree. A beautiful peacock is on its branch, just by the side of the fruit. How am I to get the same fruit without disturbing the bird?

In a running race, if you overtake the person running second, where would you be? Answer this and then answer the second question. To answer the second question, it doesn't take as much time as you took for the first question. If you overtake the last... then you arrive...?

This question is one of the best to test your reasoning skill. This can be done with a computer or without it. A computer may take one hour to calculate the answer. They say Ramanujam, the mathematic wizard could calculate the answer in 30 minutes without using a computer. Of course he could have also done it even without a computer in few seconds. You can also solve it, but require patience. Try. First understand the question. Don't rush for the answer. Think. Use your commonsense and solve it. A beautiful young girl was walking towards a temple at 3 km per hour. Ram crossed her on a motorcycle, at ten times faster speed. He wanted to give lift to her, but did not dare. He travelled for 12 minutes. On reaching the temple and seeing Goddess Shakti, he got courage and returned. By this time the girl walked further towards the temple. He saw her but again he was not courageous. He went back to the temple, got inspired and again returned. The process continued. In the final trip, he went inside the temple and prayed Goddess Shakti "Please give me courage". The girl, having reached the temple, said from behind, "Shakthi is not there in that stone. It is in you. Try to discover it." Now the question is, how much distance did Ram travel in total?

46. A question based on your common sense. Try. A hunter boasted that he would hang up a hat and walk about 2000 yards straight and shoot the hat with his pistol exactly in the middle without fail. How could he do it?

47. I was going to the market and came across a family consisting of a father, mother, two sons and three daughters. How many male members are going to the market?

48. If a cat jumps from two feet and breaks its two legs, how many legs does it break if it jumps from 5 feet? This is Common Sense.

49. Suppose a = b. Find out where (in which step) the mistake has taken place?

Step one: if a = b, then a2 = ab

Step two: (a2 - b2) = (ab - b2).

Step three: (a + b) (a - b) = b (a - b).

Step four: Deduct (a - b) from both. Then a + b = b.

How is this possible? Where was the mistake?

50. If two hens lay 2 eggs in 2 days, how many eggs does one hen lay in 1 day? Of course the answer varies, but give logical answers and not arithmetic. This question is based on your capacity to think of various alternatives. Don't jump to conclusions. Think about all the alternative probabilities.

51. On seventh August of 1990, I found a rare thing on any digital watch, at 56 seconds past 12.34. What is it?

52. Here is an excellent puzzle to test your creative and reasoning skills. Try. Four army men A, B, C, D entered into the enemy territory crossing a bridge. They came to know that the bridge is being blasted exactly after 60 minutes. They have to return back within the said time. The bridge can carry only two people at a time. It is total dark and they have only one lantern without which they cannot cross the bridge. Two people should come back to their own countryside, and then one has to take the lamp to the other side and bring another one. Total 3 trips. It would take for A 5 minutes and B 10 minutes to cross the bridge. C and D are older people and it would take 20 and 25 minutes respectively for each of them to cross the same. This is an arithmetical problem and has no twists. Don't think of sending back the lamp by ropes or swimming through water etc. This is a very interesting question and don't see the answer at the back of this book immediately. Think and discuss with your

friends. Just calculate who should accompany whom first and go back to bring the second one. If A takes the entire responsibility of bringing all the other three, it would take 65 minutes in total. But there is a way. Think.

53. Are you a decoding specialist? Try this: You find a note written in code under your classmate's desk. It reads: Abc'd ebbf ghi ibajckgldmkf. dbemji. You could decode the first part. It reads: Let's keep our relationship. The curiosity is getting to you. Can you figure out the signature?

54. Another question on common sense: I inserted seven doughnuts to a rope and tied the two ends of it with a knot. The question now is... I wanted to eat a doughnut without cutting the rope and breaking doughnut. How?

55. This question is already been given in this book. Answer is demonstrated. Just to test your memory... There are 10 crows. One is killed with a pistol. How many will remain? Choose the answer from the following four: A. None. B. One. C. Nine. D. More than zero.

56. Kus celebrated his birthday, but his twin brother has not. Why?

57. Kusa, Lav are twins, born with six hours difference. One day Kusa celebrated his birthday. His twin brother, Lav, celebrated his birthday two days later. How?

58. Go through the two previous questions. It may be easy to answer it. But here is a more complicated question. Kus has celebrated his birthday, one or two days after his younger brother celebrated it. How? How can an older brother celebrate his birthday after his younger one? Don't go to logical medical sense that the boy who comes out of the womb is younger, and the child in the womb is conceived first and hence he is the senior. We expect more logical answer than that.

59. The word HEROINE contains three other English words, HE, HER, IN, in it. Likewise, find out a seven-letter word, which contains eight English words without any rearrangement

60. Here is a question testing your verbal I.Q. If somebody asks you how you cut a cake into eight pieces with just three cuts, you know that a 'plus' (+) cut above the cake, followed by a horizontal slice in the middle can make it eight pieces. Visual thinking does not play a role here, but the verbal communication does. Can you explain in words the solution to your brother or friend without using your hands?

How to cut the cake into 8 pieces with just three cuts? Tell us in any language, either English or your colloquial.

61. Ram is twice as old as Krishna will be, when Kamala is as old as Ram is now. Who is the oldest and youngest among the three?

62. Take a single letter and expand it into words. It improves your language skills. You can take the help of a dictionary. For example if you take 'a' you can continue like this: A, At, Mat, Team, Steam, Stream, Steamer etc. With the letter 'B' you can make: Be, Bet, Beat, Abate etc. Now start with 'E' and go create words like Me, Met... try to create at least three more words.

63. This is the best example to test your capacity to think laterally. Suppose you are going in a deep forest on a stormy night and found 3 people underneath a tree. One is a doctor, who saved your life when you were kid and the other was a 90-year-old lady suffering from asthma requiring immediate hospitalisation. The third one was your dream girl / boy. It takes four hours to reach a town. If you have only one seat in your car besides you, what would you do? Around 87% prefer to take the old lady and are called sentimentalists. Approximately 22% prefer to take the doctor. They argue that he is more beneficial to the society. They are realists. 1% Materialists of course prefer to go with their ideal he/she by their side. But can you think a better way?

64. This is an interesting question, basing on your logical inference. "What is today?" I asked. "If tomorrow is yesterday, today is Saturday" he replied. What is today?

65. 2+2=2x2. Taking this as an example find out the values of a, b, c, if a + b + c = a x b x c

61. Intellectual endurance: It is the staying power, the capacity to persist, without getting distracted. Take a 'single digit number' and a 'three digit number' of your choice...say 8 and 156. Go on adding 13 to the first number and deduct 7 from the later. Do it simultaneously (your first number is 8 - 156. hence your second number would be 21-149, third 34-142 etc). At one point your brain does not cooperate, but don't stop. Take a few minutes rest and start again. This is one way of developing intellectual endurance. (At the end... what are your final figures? Don't jump to calculate the end figures, do it step by step to test your patience)

67. A fish weighs 2 kilos plus half of its weight. What is the weight of the fish?

68. A flock of sheep was going down a small lane between a huge hillock on one side and a deep valley on the other. A torrent river was violently flowing through the valley. As the Sheppard was cautiously steering his herd through the narrow road, from behind a truck came. The young driver was in a rush to take his ailing mother to the hospital. He urged the Sheppard to move the sheep aside so that he could pass through. The Sheppard declined to do so fearing that the crammed sheep, dreaded by the sound of the truck might panic and fall down into the overflowing waters. The boy explained the situation. But there was no other way except to follow the sheep slowly from behind till the road widens, which would take another half an hour. The condition of the ailing mother in the truck was deteriorating. Sensing the severity of the situation, the Sheppard was struck by an idea. What is the idea?

69. I bought a sari and a blouse for 11/-. The cost of the sari is 10/- more than the blouse. What is the cost of the blouse?

70. A milkmaid adds 4 litres of water to 2 litres of milk, before distribution. By mistake she added 2 litres water to 4 litres of milk. How much more water has she to add to rectify her mistake?

71. A painter is supposed to mix 4 litres of white paint and 2 litres of black. But by mistake he mixed 2 litres of white and 4 liters of black. How much minimum has he to pour out to correct his mistake?

72. A hunter walked 10 kilo meters straight from his hut and found a bear, chased it to his left exactly at 90 degrees for 10 miles, killed it, turned to his left at 90 degrees and dragged it straight for 10 miles. Surprisingly he found his hut, without turning to his left and walking for another 10 miles, to complete the square. Now the question is: what is the colour of the bear?

73. A woman had two sons who were born on the same hour of the same day of the same year. But they were not twins. How could this be so?

74. A king wanted more warriors in his country. He proposed to increase the population of men compared to women. Hitherto it was 1:1. He set down a law that required every couple to continue having male children until it had its first female baby and then to stop having children altogether. Excellent idea. First: Male baby?

Continue for another. Second male? Congratulations. Third female? Stop. The country has now two males and one female. If your first baby is female, you cannot take risk of another baby, as there is a scope of the second one also being a female, thus giving the country 2 female babies. Hence you have to stop with one female. The idea of the king appears to be logical. After two generations what would have happened? How much would have been the growth of males compared to females? Double? Triple?

75. Unable to bear the passenger's non-stop talking, the taxi driver said that he is deaf and cannot hear anything without an aid machine. The passenger kept quiet but realised that the driver told him a lie when he was paying the meter.

76. The question is not based on logic but arithmetic. If 4 hens lay 4 eggs in 4 days, how many eggs 2 hens lay in 2 days?

77. A 5-year old boy name Ram is presented with two stories and asked which character has committed the worse crime and should receive the more punishment?

In the first story, a little boy breaks one cup when he climbs secretly over the counter to steal a cake placed on top of the refrigerator. In the second story, a little girl breaks five cups and one plate by accident, when she trips over the cat while she is helping her mother in the kitchen. Which of these answer Ram is going to give?

a. The little boy, because he broke the cup while stealing the cake.

b. The girl, because she did more damage.

c. The boy and girl equally, as breaking a thing is wrong.

Intentionally they have not broken them, and hence nobody can be punished.

There are 6 squares underneath. Each square is divided into 4 equal parts in different shapes. How many shapes can you make other than the below? You can make at least 6 more. Of course...if you are intelligent and think of the technique, then you can make millions. Try.

79. We have taken a paper in square shape, cut into two and made an 'L' shape. See the diagram hereunder.

Can you make another 'L' shape in a different way?

In the following figure, can you draw three lines from their house to their gates? The lines should not touch one another.

81. From Station to Bus-stand, Via Tank Bund is 8 miles. From Tank Bund to Bus-stand via Station is 7 miles. From Station to Tank Bund via Bus-stand is 11 miles. Calculate the distances between: Station and Bus-stand, Station and Tank Bund and Bus-stand and Tank Bund

82. A and B participated in a 100 metres running race. B rallied back by 5 metres. To encourage him, this time A stood 5 metres behind the starting line. Now who will win? A or B or Both?

83. Final question. Divide 30 by half and add 5. What is the total?

ANSWERS

1. A) Two oranges. B) Two oranges (you have given one to your friend from 'it' i.e., basket). C) Three oranges (You have given one to your friend from the oranges taken by you).

2. A) Two minutes. If it takes 3 hours for one lakh couples to marry, it takes the same time for one couple also. B) Two minutes. C) Four minutes.

3. Did you get 5000? The correct answer is actually 4100. Don't you believe it? Check it on your calculator!

4. Simply push the cork into the bottle and shake the coin out.

5. Convert the Celsius into Fahrenheit. 00 Celsius means 320 F. 'Double chill' means 160 F. Convert back to Celsius. 16 x 5/9. It works out to –8.80 C. This is not a perfect answer but no other way out.

6. By turning opposite sides, facing their backs.

7. An Eskimo holding a light.

8. Four seconds. This is an interesting question. There is one interval between two bells, which takes 2 seconds. (Bell...Interval... Bell). Between three bells, there are two intervals (Bell...Interval... Bell... Interval... Bell) and hence the answer works out to be four seconds.

9. Five seconds to strike five bells means... five seconds to complete four intervals. (See the above answer again). In striking ten, there are nine intervals. To complete the same, it would take 9 X 5 divided by 4, i.e., 11.25 seconds.

10. Four eggs. There is chance of your making an error, if you are in a hurry to answer.

11. It was daytime... not night.

12. Liar.

13. Calculate the growth rate of world population during the past 5 years, and divide it by time. The answer approximately works out to 250.

14. Both counted the same.

15. No. If I accept the offer, I would be thousands of kilometres away from the earth in space. The pilot is going to leave me exactly at the same space from where he has taken me. In one hour the earth will be travelling away for the said spot.

16. Apple costs two rupees and cost of the orange is one rupee. But nobody asked you to find out the individual prices. You need not work out the cost of an apple and orange separately. The correct answer is 'Four rupees' and it is given in the question itself. Just check up the question again. And that is natural intelligence.

17. 12+3+4+5-6-7+8-9 = 10

18. All the numbers can be divided...! '2' divides every number evenly... into half. For example 5 can be divided evenly into 2.5 each.

19. China, Pakistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Nepal and considering P.O.K... Afghanistan.

20. 'My father's son' can be replace by a single word, 'myself'. The statement then can be read, as "His father is myself". Means, the person in the painting is my son. This is how you have to eliminate the complications and confusion to make it simple (read the KISS principle again).

21. This is also the reason accounts do not mix the income and expenditure. The answer is in the way the question is worded. You cannot add, what one person

'had'... to what someone else has 'paid' and come up with any kind of a meaningful number. Each man has paid Rs. 9. The bellboy has Rs.2. The hotel clerk has the other 25. If you wish to know other way round... from the standpoint of the original Rs. 30: Each man has one rupee with them. The bellboy has Rs.2, hotel clerk has Rs.25. Total 2+25+3=30.

22. Bet 60/- on England and 40/- on India. You will get. 20/- profit whichever country wins.

23. Don't take the offer. The fortune-teller simply tells that the scores are 0: 0 as the match has not yet started.

24. The other side of the rope is not tied up; hence it can go and have its bone.

25. It is not raining. He is sweating.

26. Weigh 6 and 6. From the batch that weighs low, make it 3 and 3 and weigh again. One side shows less weight. Weigh 1 and 1 from that batch. You would know which coin weighs less. If both are equal, then the culprit is the third coin.

27. If you take 6 and 6 as you have done for the previous question, you can never derive the correct answer because you don't know whether the said odd coin (culprit) weighs less or more. Hence try weighing 4 and 4. If they are equally balanced, those eight coins are genuine. You are left with 4 coins now. Take two from them and weigh with two of your 'genuine' coins. If they are equal, you are left with two coins, one genuine and one culprit. You have now ten genuine coins with you. Weigh one of the two left out coins with a genuine one and if they are of same weight, the remaining one is the culprit. The calculation does not end up here. Suppose, the first two batches of 4 coins each do not weigh equally. Batch 'A' is heavier than 'B'. Then? You have third batch 'C' of 4 genuine coins, which are kept aside. Take two coins from the heavier side and one from the lighter side and keep in the right pan. Do the same thing with left pan. If they balance, the culprit is from the reaming two coins. You can easily check up with your genuine coin of 'C' batch, kept aside. Confused? Then go to the next question given on the next page. Try to understand the concept.

28. The stumbling block is the number of artisans. One hundred is just too many to handle. But it can be found. Take one toy from A, two from B... hundred from the

last artisan. The total weight should have been (1 + 2 + 3.... 100) x 16 grams. If one gram is short, the first artisan is the culprit. If fifty grams are short, the fiftieth artisan is the thief. Hope you understood the logic. Now try to understand the same logic in the solution for the 22nd question.

29. To convert IX into 6 (six), just add 'S' to it and it would become SIX. To make IX (nine) from XI, add a horizontal line (minus) in between X and I. (X-I is nine). To make VIII by adding a single line to IX, add 8 (which is a single line) at the end, and it would become 'I X 8' (One multiplied by eight).

30. A) Not even a single egg. With the single bite and swallow, the stomach will cease to be empty. B) Call another fire station. C) Outer side. D) Left hand (or left finger, left wrist).

31. You are 24 now. After 8 years you would be 32 and she would be 16.

32. A, an, ran, anger, strange, range, ranger, tear, star, stare, rat, rate, rage, gear, tan, stage, gate, eat, ate, gas, sage, tag, gate, great, grate. You can work out another five to ten words if you further try... eager, tea...etc.

33. Ten trains in Toto. At 5 o' clock, when the passenger started from Agra, there are already five trains on the track. Another five trains start between 5 to 10 p.m. hence the total is ten. A complicated answer, but you can visualise.

34. Ask one of them, "If I enquire your brother whether this road leads to Rampur, would he say yes or no?" If the reply is 'yes' the road does not lead to your destiny. Did not get the point? Ok. Here is the explanation. If you asking the question to a liar, and suppose he said 'yes' then true person says 'no' and that is the truth i.e., the road does not lead to the village. If you are asking the truth teller first and if he says 'yes', the liar also says 'yes'. Obviously the road does not lead to the village. Thus... in any case... for any 'yes' answer, the road does not lead to your destination and vice versa.

35. There is no A or E in the following sentence. "It is up to you to know that I will kick you out of this city if you don't opt to show your support to my son, who is in politics". Try one more.

36. Blindly take a piece from the bottle labelled "MIXTURE". If you get a sweet, then the entire bottle contains them, as there cannot be mixture in it. Write the

label "SWEET" on it. Now you have two other bottles with titles 'Sweet' on one bottle and 'cookies' on other. If you write 'mixture' on sweets bottle, the third bottle is unchanged. But it is given in the problem that all the labels are wrongly pasted. Hence write "MIXTURE" on the cookies bottle, and "COOKIES" on the mixture bottle.

37. This is a question on your capacity to shift your paradigm. The Surgeon is the mother of the child.

There can be another answer also. It's more complicated, and tests your capacity to think beyond limitations. The father and the son in the car... both can be doctors. The younger doctor died. The brain surgeon is the grand father of the younger, who is dead in the accident. He said, "I cannot operate on my son".

38. Wait till the bird goes.

39. If you answer that you would arrive first, you are absolutely wrong!!! Cause... when you overtake the second, you take his place so you arrive second!!! The second question is a tricky one. If you answer that you arrive 'second last' then you are wrong again. Tell me, how can you overtake the 'last'!!!! The question itself is wrong!

40. You have to work on logical inference.

- If A is the robber, then B is the only person who is telling the truth.
- If B is the thief, A and C are telling the truth.
- If C is the burglar, A and B are telling the truth.

According to the question only one is telling the truth. Hence A is the culprit.

41. Ram was travelling at 30 miles speed and reached the temple in 12 minutes. It means the temple is 6 kilometres away. The girl would take two hours to travel this distance. During this time, Ram is continuously roaming between her and the temple. During these two hours, he would travel 60 kilometres. Such simple is the answer.

42. A and B should get 7 and 1 rupee respectively. First calculate the cost of each chapatti. C ate one third of the chapattis and paid rupees 8. Hence, the total cost of 8 chapattis is 24/- and each chapatti is 3 rupees worth. It means; A has 15 rupees worth of chapattis and B has 9 rupees worth. Both have eaten 8 rupees worth. Hence

he should get Rupees 7. B should get 1 rupee.

43. Obviously the doors, as the heat absorption in the mid-day would be different.

44. Puppy.

45. Take water into the big (5 litres) jug and pour into smaller (3) one. You will be left with 2 litres in the big jug. Empty the small jug and transfer the water from bigger one to smaller one. Now the smaller jug has 2 litres in it. Take another 5 litres and top the smaller one. You will have the required 4 litres in the big jug. You can do this exercise other way round also.

Take 3 litres in the small jug, pour into the bigger one, again do the same thing. You will be left with one litre in the small jug. Pour out water from the bigger jug and empty it. You have one litre in the small jug. Pour it into the bigger one, and again take 3 and repeat it. You will have the required 4 litres in the bigger jug.

46. The hunter hung his hat on his pistol and walked for 2000 yards.

47. Only one, if I am a male. They are all 'coming' out from the market and came across me.

48. 'We cannot tell. Theory of probability won't work out here' is the answer.

49. The mistake is in step three. A-b = 0. You cannot say, just because 5 x 0 = 4 x 0 and hence 4 = 5.

50. Each hen lays one egg on alternative days (or) one hen lays one egg each day and the another hen does not lay eggs at all (or) One hen lays 2 eggs every alternative day. Hence the answer can be either nil or one or two.

51. The watch shows 1234567890.

52. To answer this question, we normally think that A (a person who walks very fast among the four) should bring all the other three. But it would take 65 minutes. (10 minutes for A and B to come to their own countryside, +5 minutes for A to go to the other side alone, +20 minutes for A and C to come, +5 minutes or A to go back to bring D and finally +25 minutes for both of them to come to their country). But when the last couple are in the middle, the bridge would blow up into pieces. Then how? Think in a different way. How about two old people walking together? First A and B

(10) and then A goes back to the other side (5) sends C and D (25) and then B goes to the other side (10) and both A and B would come back (10). Total 60 minutes. They can see the bridge blowing after they reached their home country safely.

53. S.e.k.h.a.r.

54. By untying the knot.

55. The correct answer is 'more than zero'. No. Don't get irritated or confused. 'Zero' is anyway not the correct answer, as the dead crow would be there. 'Nine' is also not the correct answer, as the crows may go away by hearing the sound of the pistol. But if they are deaf, they cannot hear the sound, and they would stay. What happens if the dead crow is the beloved child of a mother crow? With this logical inference, we conclude. Any way one crow (dead) is going to be there and can me more also. Hence the correct answer is 'more that zero'.

56. Kus was born on 28th Feb, and his brother was born on 29th. This being not a leap year he has not celebrated his birthday.

57. The first boy was born on Feb. 28th and the second was born on March first. It is a leap year and on 29th nobody celebrated.

58. At the time she went into labour, the mother of the twins was travelling by boat. Suppose the older twin was born early on March 1st. The boat then crossed a time zone and the younger twin was born on February the 28th. Therefore, the younger twin celebrates his birthday a day before his older brother.

59. THEREIN. This word contains 8 English words: There, the, he, her, here, ere, rein, in.

60. How best may be you are in communicating, the other person some times may not understand you. The best way is to use your mental flexibility without confusing the others. Divide the cake into four parts with two cross cuts. So far it is easy. Then place the 4 pieces one above the other. Cut them vertically to make eight pieces. Mental flexibility is switching from one mode to another mode of thinking that makes the conversation simple.

61. Ram and Kamala respectively.

62. Meat, Teams, Stream, streams.

63. Shift your paradigm. Doctor is a better person to join the old lady at the hospital. You personally know him also. How about giving your keys to the doctor asking him to take the old lady to the hospital? You can be with your dream girl / boy spending a beautiful stormy night at the forest...!

64. Thursday. To arrive at the answer, we have to work out from backwards. If today were Thursday, tomorrow would be Friday. If Friday was yesterday, today is Saturday (He said today is Saturday).

65. 1 x 2 x 3 = 1 + 2 + 3

66. You should arrive at 294-2. Even if you could not, don't worry. You have the capacity to work till the end, and that is 'patience'.

67. If you answer as 3 kilos, you are wrong. The correct answer is 4 kilos as under : Suppose the weight of the fish = x kilos.

$x = 2 + x$ kilos.

$x - x = 2$

$x = 4$

68. He asked the boy to stop his ignition and the sound. He navigated his sheep in the reverse direction and made the road clear for the truck. And that is lateral thinking.

69. One rupee? No.... Sorry its not one rupee. If the cost of Blouse is one rupee (according to you), then the cost of the sari should be 11 rupees (Ten more than the blouse : according to the question). Then the total of the two is 12/-. But according to question, the total cost of both should be 11/- only. Hence what should be the cost of sari and blouse? It is Rs. 10.50 and 0.50 total 11/-. Difference 1/2 rupee. Its half rupee. The question says S + B = 11 and S – B = 1. Calculate.

70. Six litres. Water should be double than the milk content. The content of milk is 4 litres. Hence, the water should be 8. Hence another 6 litres are to be added.

71. Same as the above question, but here he has to pour out the paint. To get the

correct mix, he should pour out 3 litres of mixture and add 3 litres of white paint fresh.

72. White. Longitudes join in a triangular shape only in polar region. See the diagram. Bears are white in colour in the said region.

73. Don't strain your brain thinking too much and analysing the question. They are Triplets. (Or quadruplets). This puzzle stumps many people. They try outlandish solutions involving test-tube babies or surrogate mothers.

74. No. Sorry. It won't happen the way the king thought. Suppose there are 100 couples in the country. Fifty percent of couples who give birth to female babies would stop further child due to the king's order. The parents of male babies would continue for second pregnancy. In all probability the next baby would be a girl. And then they also stop. The total babies are 150, of which the female would be 100, male 50. That way, after one generation, the female population would be double than the males, shattering the plans of the king.

75. How could the driver take the person to the destination if he is deaf?

76. One egg. For a simple question of this nature, most students answer two eggs or four or zero. Analyse the question. If four hens lay in 4 days 4 eggs, then one hen in 4 days lays 1 egg; and one hen in 1 day lays 1/4th egg, and in two days it works out to egg. Hence 2 hens give 1 egg in two days. Note that this is an arithmetic problem and not to be thought logically. Now try this question to know the logic of 4 people eat 4 kilos of rice in 4 days, how many kilos 2 people eat in 2 days?

77. Ram is 5 years old. At that age, to answer a question of this sort, kids take into consideration only the loss to the property. He answers that the girl should be punished six times more than the boy. But as the children grow, they take in to account the intent of the doer and the situational circumstances. This is called Piaget and Kohlberg theory. Then... what is your judgement.

78.

79.

If you try from A's house first, you can never think of an answer. Try from C's house first to reach C gate. Then go from B's house to B gate. Finally you would know how

to proceed from 'A's house to his gate.

81. Take two rounds. See the diagram for better clarification.

You would touch every place twice. You would notice that you travelled in total, 26 miles (8+7+11). For two rounds if the distance travelled were 26 miles means, one circle would be 13 miles. With this backdrop, calculate the distance between two stations. You know that Station – Tank Bund – Bus Stand route as per the question is 8 km. Now it can easily be calculated that the direct route, i.e. Bus stand to Station is 5 km (13 – 8). In the same fashion, to Station to Tank Bund = 2 km (13 – 11) and between Bus stand and Tank Bund is 6 km (13 – 7).

82. Even then A would reach first. Suppose, it took A 100 seconds to reach 100 metres. In that time B ran only 95 metres. A's speed is 1 metre per second and B's is 0.95 seconds per second. Now in the revised race, A has to travel 105 metres and it takes 105 seconds for him to reach the target. Within this time B runs 99.75 metres only.

The answer is 65. If you have answered 20, observe the question carefully again. It is not 30 ÷ 2 + 5. The question says what is 30 divided by plus 5.

Note: Many of these questions are asked at interviews for highly paid salaries. Don't feel disgusted even if you could not answer certain questions. Some of them are hard to answer even for a mathematical genius or a logical thinker. Sit with parents, and tease them with these questions. Win a chocolate or an ice cream. But keep in mind the chapter "Food habits" that you have studied earlier in this book. Consume it before six in the evening. Best of luck.

THE END